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# "OUR TOMB OR SALVATION?" THE HISTORY OF UKRAINIAN IMMIGRATION INTO ARGENTINA IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD, 1920-1939

BY

SERGE CIPKO ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Edmonton, Alberta

Spring 1995

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# ABSTRACT

This study reconstructs the Ukrainian experience in Argentina in 1920-1939. It demonstrates, through extrapolation of official quantitative data, that Ukrainian immigration into Argentina constituted not only the largest Ukrainian overseas emigration of that period, but also one of the largest groups to enter Argentina in 1920-1939. A multicausal framework is adopted to explain the factors that induced emigration to Argentina. A brief account of early Ukrainian immigration in 1897-1914, focusing on the main centres of Ukrainian settlement in the provinces of Buenos Aires and Misiones, is followed by an analysis of the degree of socio-economic integration of the second wave of immigrants in 1920-1939, their reception by Argentine society, and their settlement patterns in Argentina. Particular attention is devoted to the ambivalent attitude of the Argentine elite towards Slavic immigration, and, in this context, the genesis of the *Polaco* stereoptype which encompassed Ukrainians and other Eastern Europeans. The study also examines extensively the evolution of self-supporting Ukrainian community organizations, their relationship with Argentine and European politics, and the roots of factionalism within the Ukrainian community. Sociological conceptual frameworks are employed to account for organizational differentiation among the Argentine Ukrainian immigrants.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There have been many friends and colleagues who have contributed building blocks to the assembling of this dissertation. And perhaps the most difficult challenge I have had to face in completing the treatise is remembering them all after those intermmitent years engaged in preparation of this work. My deepest apologies go to those whom I have obliviously omitted here, and I urge the good people concerned not to remain silent, but to alert me to this oversight so their names can be added to a modified version of this thesis in the event that it is published.

A number of individuals referred me to sources that enriched the data used in this work, among those in Edmonton, Jars Balan and Ostap Skrypnyk. Also in Edmonton, Peter Melnycky deserves a special word of thanks, not only for providing a steady stream of sources but also for the time that he has expended in lending a listening ear to periodic thoughts and reflections on my research as it evolved. Our friendship developed during such discussions over morning coffee breaks and it would be no exaggeration to say that they served to sustain my inspiration and enthusiasm for the topic.

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Financial contraints at times distracted me from my thesis, and on one instance this distraction took me as far abroad as Australia, where I taught for the duration of three semesters. I am grateful to Dr. Ihor Gordijew for affording me the opportunity to teach in the field of Ukrainian Studies at Macquarie University in Sydney, and to my friends at the Ukrainian Studies Centre at Macquarie, Dr. Halyna Koscharsky, Marta Harasowska, Dr. Anna Shymkiw and Natalia Vanderloos, and Dr. Marko Pavlyshyn of the Ukrainian Lectureship at Monash University in Melbourne, for their support and for their organization of forums in which the topic of my thesis could be discussed. I made many friends in Australia, besides those mentioned, and wish to also thank them for their part in ensuring that my sojourn there would be at once a pleasant, challenging, and stimulating one.

The staff at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies in Edmonton, too, is to be commended for their consistent support, which included the approval of a travel grant to do research in Buenos Aires. I would also like to remember in this regard the Bishop Budka Charitable Society in the same city (Edmonton) which issued me with some supplementary monies that served to cover the cost of the fare from Buenos Aires to the Argentine province of Misiones, some 1,000 kilometres northeast of the capital. In Argentina I was once again fortunate to be in the company of supportive individuals and institutions. Among the latter were the Prosvita and Vidrodzhennia societies, which displayed me warm hospitality and granted access to materials. Individuals whom I wish to particularly credit in this respect are: Alejandro Cham, Jorge Danylyszyn, Ana-Catalina Golisz, Pedro Guziuk, Maria Han, Oleh Jachno, Maria-Luisa Kapuscinski, Nicolas and Ana-Maria Liwscha, the late Father Pankratii Niunka in Buenos Aires, and the late Dr. Mariano Balanda (the first Argentine M.P. of Ukrainian origin), Jose Szenczuk and Pedro Chudyk and their families in Misiones. I would also like to thank the members of staff at the Archives and library of the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and especially, the Centro de Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos in Buenos Aires.

In 1989-1990 I was the beneficiary of a scholarly exchange between the University of Alberta and the University of Lviv, Ukraine, which enabled me to visit a number of archives and libraries in Western and central Ukraine. The staff at the Stefanyk Library and the Oblast and Central State Historical Archives of Lviv, and the state archives in Lutsk, Chernivtsi and Kyiv were very helpful during my research endeavours at their respective institutions.

Although they are mentioned towards the end of my acknowledgements, there are two individuals for whom I reserve the greatest part of my respect and gratitude. They are my supervisors Drs. John-Paul Himka and David Johnson. Both have not only offered me guidance and constructive criticism, but have also proved to be excellent friends who have always assisted me to improve my situation, materially and otherwise, in hours of need. Should the reader find any merit in this thesis s/he should be aware that it is the result of having had splendid supervisors and generally a pleasant working ambience in the Department of History at the University of Alberta. Conversely, in the event that the reader tends to detect flaws in this thesis (and indeed there may be some even among those credited who will disagree strongly with interpretations therein), then here the names of my supervisors, should not be associated with any of its shortcomings, for which I alone claim responsibility. The same applies to the other members of my thesis examining committee (Drs. David Hall, Fred Judson, Martin Katz, Richard Smith, all at the University of Alberta, and Dr. Oleh Gerus, University of Manitoba, and Dr. Bohdan Kordan, University of

Saskatchewan), and furthermore, Dr. Karol Krotki of the Department of Sociology, University of Alberta, all of whom provided valuable and constructive criticism. Readers will, of course, judge for themselves the virtues or inadequacies of this work: my hope is that in the course of their deliberations, the thesis will serve to provoke discussion and debate, and above all, stimulate more studies on the subject.

It has been customary in the acknowledgements pages to thank one's spouse and now that my turn has come, I can say that I now understand the extent of the debt that is owed. Jacqueline, my wife, has throughout exhibited the full range of human qualities, her support has been invariable, and she has selflessly shared in the tasks of this thesis.

Finally, there are two individuals who have been with me my entire life till now whom I also wish to affectionately acknowledge. They are my mother, Maria-Teresa Pulido Uriel, a progeny of Spain, and Serhii Cipko [Tsipko], a native of Ukraine, who first instilled in me a deep appreciation for the Spanish and Ukrainian-speaking worlds, respectively. They, I am sure, will be relieved to hear that this thesis is now completed.

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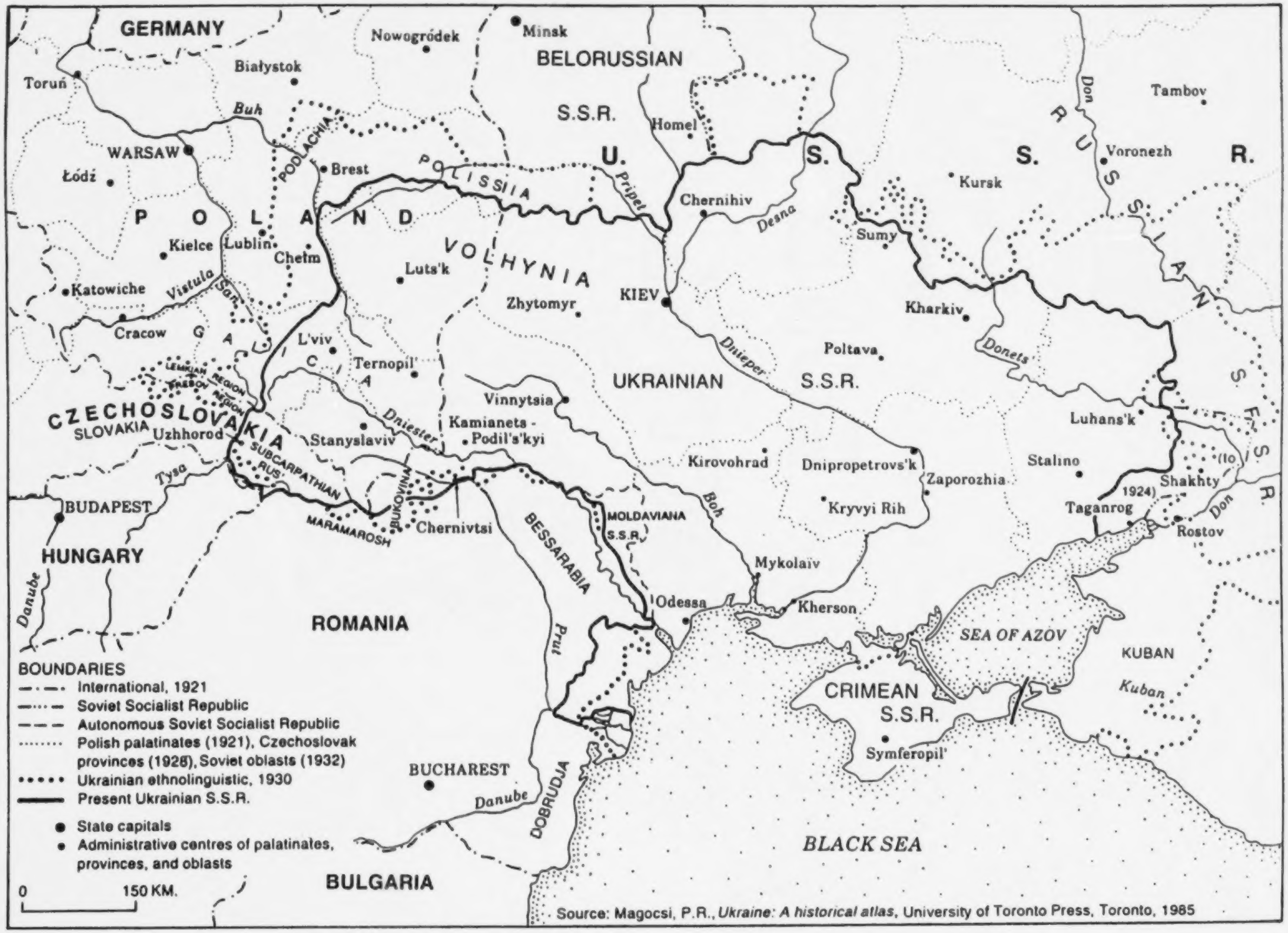
# MAPS

I. *UKRAINE, 1920-1939*

II. *ARGENTINA AND NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES*

# Ukraine: 1920-1939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Chernihiv
Desna
Sumy
Kharkiv
Donets
Katowiche
Vistula
San
Cracow
GALICIA
L'viv
Ternopil'
LEMKIAN REGION
BOIKO REGION
CZECHOSLOVAKIA
SLOVAKIA
Uzhhorod
Stanyslaviv
Dniester
Kamianets-Podil's'kyi
Vinnytsia
UKRAINIAN
S.S.R.
Poltava
Dnieper
Luhans'k
SUBCARPATHIAN RUS'
Tysa
BUDAPEST
HUNGARY
Danube
MARAMAROSH
BUKOVINA
Chernivtsi
BESSARABIA
MOLDAVIANA S.S.R.
Kirovohrad
Dnipropetrovs'k
Zaporozhia
Kryvyi Rih
Stalino
(to 1924)
Shakhty
Taganrog
Rostov
Boh
Mykolaiv
Odessa
Kherson
ROMANIA
Prut
SEA OF AZOV
KUBAN
Kuban
CRIMEAN S.S.R.
Symferopil'
BUCHAREST
DOBRUDJA
BLACK SEA
BULGARIA
BOUNDARIES
International, 1921
Soviet Socialist Republic
Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic
Polish palatinates (1921), Czechoslovak provinces (1928), Soviet oblasts (1932)
Ukrainian ethnolinguistic, 1930
Present Ukrainian S.S.R.
State capitals
Administrative centres of palatinates, provinces, and oblasts
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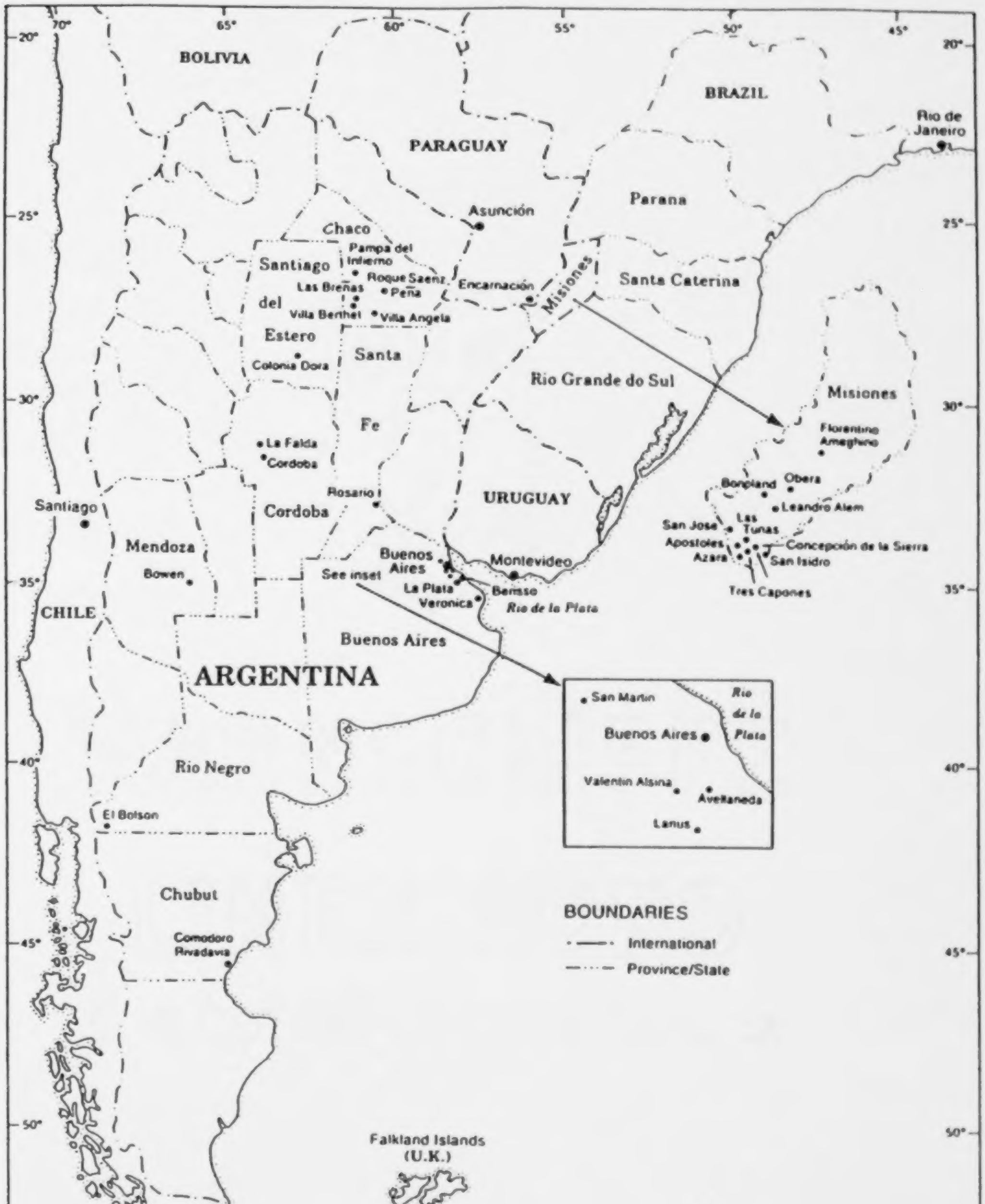
Source: Magocsi, P.R., *Ukraine: A historical atlas*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1985

# Argentina and Neighbouring Countries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ARGENTINA
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Rio Negro
Valentin Alsina
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El Bolson
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Falkland Islands (U.K.)
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50°
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40°
35°

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| AUUC | Association of United Ukrainian Canadians |
| FRWOSA | Federation of Russian Workers' Organizations in South America |
| FUBWO | Federation of Ukrainian and Belarusian Workers' Organizations |
| OUN | Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists |
| Sel-Rob | Ukrainian Peasants' and Workers' Socialist Alliance |
| UAOC | Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church |
| UEPS | Ukrainian Emigrant Protection Society |
| UNR | Ukrainian People's Republic |
| USH | Ukrainian War Veterans' Association of Argentina |
| UUE | Union of Ukrainian Engineers |
| UUMH | Union of Ukrainian Monarchists-Hetmanites |
| UUW | Union of Ukrainian Women |
| UUWO | Union of Ukrainian Workers' Organizations |

# INTRODUCTION

In 1974, Victor Dahl, in a study of immigrants from the former Yugoslavia in South America, remarked:

> **For Latin America, the accomplishments of Iberians, who comprised the majority of immigrants, as well as the achievements of the Anglo-Saxons and other Western Europeans, have received far more attention than those of the smaller number of Slavic and other East European settlers.**[1]

"The Slavic minorities," in his view, "especially Poles, Ukrainians and Yugoslavs, merit further attention."[2] The dearth of scholarly attention to immigrant groups such as the Ukrainian was noted the following year by a Soviet historian, who wrote: "It is a lamentable fact that the study of the life of the Ukrainian immigrants in Latin America has up till now been bypassed by academics, Soviet and non-Soviet alike."[3] In the course of the 1970s and 1980s a number of scholarly works appeared on the Ukrainian immigrants and their descendants in Argentina, but focused specifically on the settlers in the province of Misiones.[4] Nonetheless, in spite of these welcome contributions, the volume of works on Ukrainians, whether in Argentina or in Latin America generally, has remained limited, or "disappointingly small," as Latin American specialist, Oliver Marshall, concluded in a bibliography on European immigrants he compiled in 1991.[5]

---

[1] Victor C. Dahl, "Yugoslav Immigrant Experiences in Argentina and Chile," *Inter-American Economic Affairs* 28, no.3 (1974): 3.

[2] Ibid., 5.

[3] Andrei Strelko, "Primeros inmigrantes ucranianos en Latinoamerica," *America Latina* no.1 (1975): 89-90.

The year 1991 marked the declaration of Ukraine's independence and a concomitant interest in the life of Ukrainians abroad. But the works thus far published in Ukraine that deal with the Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina within the wider context of Ukrainians abroad have regrettably tended to rely on a narrow range of Western sources, to the neglect of primary material available in local archives.[6] One scholar who has made use of available published works on Ukrainians in Argentina, whose authors emanate both from that country as well as Ukraine, is Canadian historian Oleh Gerus, who has written the first, and thus far only, general survey in English on the subject to appear in a scholarly forum.[7]

---

[4] See entries nos. 1118-1119 and 1420-1422 of Oliver Marshall's *European Immigration and Ethnicity in Latin America: A Bibliography* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London, 1991).

[5] Ibid., v. Political and ideological constraints in both Argentina under the former military regime and Ukraine under the Soviets inhibited a healthy output in immigration studies. On the lack of support for this field of inquiry in Argentina, see Diego Armus, "Diez años de historiografía sobre la inmigración," *Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos* 1, no. 4 (1985): 431, and on the Ukrainian situation, see F.D. Zastavny, *Ukrainska diaspora: rozselennia ukraintsiv u zarubizhnykh krainakh* (Lviv: Svit, 1991), 6-7.

[6] See, for instance, A.M. Shlepakov, et al, *Ukraintsi v zarubizhnomu sviti* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1991), 60-70; F.D. Zastavny, *Ukrainska diaspora: rozselennia ukraintsiv u zarubizhnykh krainakh* (Lviv: Svit, 1991); and S. Iu. Lazebnyk, et al., *Zarubizhni ukraintsi: dovidnyk* (Kyiv: Ukraina, 1991), 139-146.

Two monograph-length books appeared in Ukrainian almost simultaneously at the turn of the 1980s on the history of Argentina's Ukrainian community. The author of one of them, Mykhailo Danylyshyn, affirmed that his work did not pretend to be a scholarly treatment,[8] but it does have the advantage that it is written from the perspective of an interwar immigrant who once headed the oldest secular Ukrainian organization in Argentina, the Prosvita society.[9] The other was written by Mykhailo Vasylyk, a post-World War II immigrant; its main strength is its coverage of more recent trends and events in the Ukrainian community rather than its early history.[10] Brief summaries in Spanish have appeared in various local mainstream publications from Vasylyk's book,[11] while Danylyshyn periodically wrote articles based on his research and observations that have been published in Ukrainian-language serials abroad.[12]

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[7] Oleh W. Gerus, "Ukrainians in Argentina: A Canadian Perspective," *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 11, no.2 (1986): 3-18.

[8] See his comments on the book in *Ukrainske slovo*, 21 September 1980.

[9] The book is *Ukraintsi v Argentyni* (Buenos Aires: Dorrego, 1979).

[10] The book in question is *Ukrainski poselennia v Argentini* (Munich: Ukrainian Free University, 1982).

Not a single book on the Ukrainian community in Argentina has appeared in the country whence the immigrants came -- Ukraine. The closest has been a monograph that has examined Ukrainians in the context of Slavs in Latin America in general by Andrei Strelko.[13] There have, however, been several memoirs published in Ukraine by immigrants who returned from Argentina in the 1950s,[14] and it is curious to note here that no such memoirs have emerged from among the Ukrainian community in Argentina itself: Tetiana Tsymbal wrote her memoirs after she reemigrated to the United States from Argentina.[15] While the published literature with provenance in the former Soviet Union has tended to be hostile to the non-Communist-affiliated Ukrainian community in Argentina, the works by Danylyshyn, Vasylyk, and others who belong to the latter category, have largely ignored the existence of the pro-Communist camps in their writings.

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[11] For instance, Miguel Wasylyk, "La inmigración ucrania a la Argentina," in La Inmigración a América Latina: Trabajos presentados a las Primeras Jornadas Internacionales sobre la Migración en América (Mexico City: Instituto Panamericano de Geografia e Historia, 1985), 165-169; "Inmigración ucrania en America Latina," in Pluralismo Cultural: Primer Coloquio Latinoamericano (Buenos Aires: Congreso Judío Latinoamericano, 1978), 91-100; and "La inmigración ucrania en Argentina - su integración," Skrypty-Cuadernos 1, no.1 (1984): 22-31.

[12] Among these articles are: "Ukrainski poselennia v Argentini," Ukrainskyi samostiinyk nos.7-8 (July-August 1972): 54-59 and no.9 (September 1972): 36-42, and "Krainy pivdennoi Ameryky ta ukrainski poselennia," in Almanakh Ukrainskoho Narodnoho Soiuzu na rik 1980 (Jersey City-New York: Svoboda Press, 1980), 173-182.

[13] Andrei Strelko, Slavianskoe naselenie v stranakh Latynskoi Ameriki (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1980).

[14] Panas Hubarchuk, Za okeanom (Kyiv: Derzhavne vydavnytsvo khudozhnoi literatury, 1960); Anatol Kotovsky, Selva stohne (Lviv: Kameniar, 1978) and Na berehakh La-Plata (Lviv: Kameniar, 1988); V.I Liakhovych, "Lysty pro daleke i blyzke," in Post imeni Iaroslava Halana: pamflety, statti, narysy (Lviv: Kameniar, 1984), 149-158, and Pro daleke i blyzke (Lviv: Kameniar, 1985); and the short recollections in

The scholarly literature on Ukrainians in Argentina, then, is not vast and the studies that draw on primary sources are fewer still. It is admittedly not easy to locate primary sources on the Argentine Ukrainian community, and while in general the field of immigration studies is experiencing something of a boom in recent years in Argentina, the development of this field in Latin America still lags far behind its equivalent in North America.[16] The study of Ukrainian immigrants in North America has clearly benefitted from the general interest and institutional support that has

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*Iak my zhyly za okeanom: rozpovidi repatriantiv* (Lviv: Knyzhkovo-zhurnalne vydavnytsvo, 1958).

[15] Tetiana Mykhailivska Tsymbal, *Spohady: Moie zhyttia na emigratsii* (Buenos Aires: Julian Serediak, 1984).

[16] For a general discussion of immigration historiography in Argentina, see the article by Diego Armus, "Diez años de historiografia sobre la inmigración," *Estudios migratorios Latinoamericanos* 1, no.4 (1985): 431-460.

abetted the field there, and the respective communities have facilitated their research by initiating archives and museums in the main centres of Ukrainian settlement, compiling finding aids to specific collections in these and national archives, libraries and other repositories, and by conducting bibliographical surveys and preparing indexes to the major immigrant newspapers.

The Argentine Ukrainian community has thus far not been able to accomplish even a fraction of the research that their counterparts in North America have performed. But concrete interest in this area can be traced to the early 1950s when a local publishing company, Peremoha, drafted an appeal which was addressed to Ukrainians in Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Chile, "and other countries of smaller Ukrainian settlement," for documents, photographs, written accounts, clippings from the Ukrainian and mainstream press, and any other materials relating to the history of Ukrainians in South America.[17] The appeal appears to have fallen on deaf ears, for there has been no reference subsequently to any existing repository of such material.

The study that follows has been conducted on the basis of an extensive search for materials that encompassed both sides of the Atlantic. A visit to Ukraine, particularly the city of

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[17] *Ukrainske slovo,* 13 June 1954.

Lviv, in 1989-1990 permitted the tapping of primary sources in archives and libraries in that city as well as in the capital, Kyiv, and two other regional centres in Western Ukraine, Chernivtsi and Lutsk. A follow-up visit to Argentina in July and August of 1991 enabled similar research to be conducted in Buenos Aires. While the possibilities for additional research have not been exhausted, that which has been realized has allowed for the synthesis of the readily available published literature and its comparison or supplement with hard data.

Historians have invariably been wary of the dangers of relying on secondary sources to form conclusions, if only because mistakes, errors and misinterpretations would inevitably be repeated. This study has been cautious to avoid such risks and has attempted to draw attention to those instances when such judgements of error have been committed. Among those which have occurred concern notions of the actual numbers of Ukrainians who emigrated to Argentina in the interwar period. While no estimates have been ventured for those who immigrated before World War I (it is hoped that as the Argentine Ukrainian community prepares for its centenary to be commemorated in 1997, a more definitive figure will be attempted), a comparison between Argentine immigration records and Polish statistical data has afforded a more accurate projection of their numbers in 1920-1939. Previously, as Chapter One illustrates, encyclopedia articles, for which sources are not identified, have been used uncritically. Chapter One has drawn on Polish studies of emigration and other underutilized sources to assess the phenomenon of the overseas movement of Ukrainians in a wider context, and has settled on a multicausal model to explain this experience. Chapter Two makes use of composite sources to provide a concise survey of Ukrainian immigration prior to World War I, which although not the main preoccupation of this study, has nonetheless been a necessary exercise to present what available knowledge and materials exist on the subject while setting the background to the arrival of the much larger influx in the interwar period. The writing of Chapter Three has been more problematic, partly because of the nature of the sources. Those which are contemporary to the period in question tend to dwell on the negative aspects of the immigrant experience in Argentina, such as economic hardships and social dislocation. The available evidence does indeed support the thesis that widespread adversity was experienced, as the preponderance of Ukrainians in the unemployment camps of the Argentine capital attests. But the degree of pessimism expressed in the reports, in both Argentina and especially Western Ukraine, should be viewed from the perspective that perhaps the expectations of the immigrants did not meet the reality of fierce competition for the available (for most, unskilled) jobs. Many immigrants came to Argentina unprepared, were relative latecomers, and had developed no support mechanisms of relief as had other, longer established immigrant groups. That the reports of adversity may have been exaggerated, or at best may have applied more specifically to the first years of the Great Depression, can be argued on the basis that the rate of non-return for Ukrainians was lower than what it was for other immigrant groups. It may be true that many of the immigrants simply did not have the resources at their disposal to re-emigrate, but the intention of the majority, whichever view one takes, appears to have been to stay permanently in their new, adopted country. To be taken into account are such factors as the high naturalization rate of Ukrainians, a rate which deviated from the norm, as a Polish embassy official in Buenos Aires observed,[18] and the equally significant resettlement of Ukrainians from neighbouring countries to Argentina in the course of the interwar years. It bears mentioning in this regard that Argentina was overall the leading recipient of overseas Ukrainian immigrants in this period. The immigrants gradually adjusted to their new environment and integrated into a society whose population proportionately had a larger foreign-born element than was true for North America.

Chapter Four has benefitted from studies of Canadian Ukrainians, one of which has posited a Hartzian approach to explain the organizational dynamics of separate waves of Ukrainian immigrants.[19] In that particular case Louis Hartz's thesis has been adapted from its colonial application to denote the casting off from the society of departure of "fragments" to a new setting.[20] The psyche and mindset of the immigrants reflected the currents of views then circulating in their home society at their time of departure. It thus follows that they patterned their organizations on those which then existed in the homeland. While this approach is useful for explaining the genesis of the respective organizations in Argentina, a degree of caution is advised. The "fragments" did not necessarily remain frozen in their new setting, but evolved with the constant flow of immigration into Argentina and developed in consonance with trends in the Ukrainian settlements abroad and in response to events in the homeland such as the Polish repressive measures known as the Pacification of 1930 in Western Ukraine and the Famine of 1932-1933 in Soviet Ukraine, which elicited radical responses in the Argentine Ukrainian community. The "fragments" should also be assessed in terms of their weight and size relative to each other, and the degree to which they adapted in their new surroundings and were exposed to extraneous influences. Thus, the early Orthodox-Greek Catholic schisms in Misiones had no real precedent in Western Ukraine, but did characterize immigrant life elsewhere in the New World. Similarly, while the choice of affiliation to organizations in Argentina was to a significant degree determined by the regional backgrounds of the immigrants (where contrasting historical and political experiences shaped the consciousness of Ukraine's inhabitants), as was the case for the Ukrainian pro-Communist associations, the presence of a Belarusian community saw the latter associations merge in a common cause with the Belarusian organizations into a single federation. This happened only in Argentina and other countries, such as Uruguay and to a lesser extent, Paraguay, where there were significant Belarusian communities. No such practice developed among the Ukrainians in North America, nor, for that matter, in Western Ukraine under Poland. Therefore, the chapters dealing with the organizations of the Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina have balanced the theoretical literature on Ukrainian immigration in North America with other studies which examine the functions of organizations in a wider context. The empirical data that have been presented for delineating the Argentine Ukrainian experience are discussed in relation to this cumulative literature.

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[18] See "Los ucranianos en Argentina," *Estudios Latinoamericanos* no.3 (1976): 294.

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[19] Yarema Kelebay, "Three Fragments of the Ukrainian Community in Montreal, 1899-1970: A Hartzian Approach," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* XII, no. 2 (1980): 74-87.

[20] According to Hartz, "when a part of a European nation is detached from the whole of it, and hurled outward onto new soil, it loses the stimulus toward change that the whole provides. It lapses into a kind of immobility." Louis Hartz, *The Founding of New Societies: Studies in the History of the United States, Latin America, South Africa, Canada, and Australia* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964), 3.

Chapter Five has deliberately devoted the bulk of its attention to the Prosvita society, which traces its beginnings in the Buenos Aires region to 1924. This focus can be justified on two grounds. First, the Prosvita society, nominally a non-political organization, initially embraced Ukrainians of all political tendencies and regional backgrounds, and has survived as the oldest Ukrainian secular community organization in Argentina to this day. Second, while the pro-Communist camp in the community maintained, intermittently, a flourishing press, it has not been possible to locate any issues of this press either in Argentina or Ukraine. Thus, a fruitful evaluation of this segment of the community has been precluded on this count, although attempts have been made to compensate for this deficiency by recourse to other publications put out by members of that group. The sources pertaining to Prosvita and allied organizations, in contrast, have been richer and this is reflected in the detail amassed for interpreting their evolution as presented in Chapter Five.

In broad outline, the purpose of this dissertation is to examine a plurality of issues that shaped the history of the Ukrainian immigration experience in Argentina. So that these issues can be identified saliently, the dissertation has been arranged with thematic sub-headings running through each chapter. Each of the chapters in turn contains a concluding summary of the major theses that stem from the preceding discussions, although a number of subsidiary or implied theses can be detected throughout the text. The main observations that have followed from the broader discernment of the material are recapitulated in the general conclusion to the dissertation, and are assessed in conjunction with additional reflections on specific points raised, but not fully developed in the study. Such observations serve not only an intellectual purpose, but should prove instructive about the Ukrainian experience in other countries of settlement.

While it has been mentioned that there is an imbalance of sources which has necessitated a corresponding unevenness of treatment in the final chapter, the same is not true of the sources for Chapter One, for which it has been possible to synthesize the data to delineate a common experience for the disparate groups of Ukrainian immigrants in the circumstances of their collective emigration to Argentina. Chapter One analyzes the history of Ukrainian emigration to Argentina in the interwar period from the perspective of the phenomenon of Ukrainian emigration in that period in general. Ukrainian immigration into Argentina did not occur in isolation from other concurrent movements of Ukrainian migrants abroad, and therefore can only be fully understood in reference to the ensuing broader emigration patterns of 1920-1939. By presenting this issue holistically, the distinguishing features of this emigration, and the context in which it was engendered and shaped, are made clearer.

# CHAPTER ONE

## SEARCHING FOR A NEW HOME: UKRAINIAN EMIGRATION PATTERNS BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

Europe's Great War of 1914-1918 radically changed its map. One of the continent's largest national groups, the Ukrainians, had now become a national minority in four states instead of two. Previously divided among two giant land-based empires, the Russian and Austro-Hungarian, some 26 million Ukrainians in the Ukrainian SSR and 6-7 million in Western Ukraine (primarily the regions of Galicia and Volyn) made them the largest national minorities in the new states of the Soviet Union and Poland, respectively. An additional 455,000 Ukrainians in the region of Transcarpathia (Subcarpathian Rus') and 760,000 (310,000 in Bukovyna and 450,000 in Bessarabia) lived under Czechoslovakian and Romanian rule.[21] (See map I)

In the Soviet Union, Ukrainian emigration matters were not decided in the Ukrainian capital, Kharkiv (and Kyiv from 1934), but in Moscow, where policy-makers, like their predecessors in St. Petersburg, channelled Ukrainian out-migration largely eastward rather than to the West.[22] Those regions which under the former Austrian regime had traditionally sent settlers abroad, Galicia in particular, continued to do so, electing the same countries as before for overseas settlement, such as Brazil, the United States, Canada, and Argentina. The emigrants from Galicia were joined by Ukrainians from neighbouring Volyn, for whom the experience of overseas migration was relatively new; prior to the war, when Volyn was under Russian rule, the few Ukrainians who left this region for the West did so illegally. A larger proportion of Eastern Ukrainians, from the territories reconstituted into the Ukrainian SSR, participated in the postwar emigration as refugees from the Bolsheviks, after Ukraine's unsuccessful bid for independence in 1917-1921.

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[21] Orest Subtelny. *Ukraine: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 386, 428, 447-448.

[22] For a history of this emigration, see Ihor Vynnychenko, *Ukraintsi v derzhavakh kolyshnoho SRSR: istoryko-heohrafichnyi narys* (Zhytomyr: Lonok, 1992).

Argentina's Ukrainian immigrants in the interwar period (1920-1939) came primarily from Poland, and to a far lesser extent, Czechoslovakia, and Romania; a minority were also Eastern Ukrainian refugees.

### UNR refugees

The Eastern Ukrainian refugees were themselves scattered in the newly emergent states of Eastern Europe following the collapse of the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) led by Symon Petliura, and the defeat of the Russian White armies into which some Ukrainians had been drafted. League of Nations sources estimated that in 1920 some 60,000 of Petliura's followers -- 50,000 military personnel and 10,000 civilians -- were stranded in Poland. Relocation, primarily to Czechoslovakia and France, reduced that number to 35,000 by 1923.[23] Czechoslovakia, absorbing these refugees, but also others who came in separate waves, soon emerged as a leading centre of Ukrainian émigrés.[24] Romania also attracted refugees associated with the UNR. The International Committee of the Red Cross contended that perhaps 60,000 exiles from the former Russian empire lived there in 1921; according to the League of Nations, 15,000 Ukrainian and Russian refugees remained there three years later.[25] Romania, like Poland, served as a haven for Ukrainians fleeing the Soviet regime for years to come.[26] Resettlement from all three major reception centres for refugees identifying with the UNR (Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania) began early. France was a popular choice for many, others chose Belgium and the remainder formed scattered pockets elsewhere in central and western Europe.

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[23] John Hope Simpson, The Refugee Problem: Report of a Survey (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), 113-114 and 361.

[24] Vasyl Markus, "Bohemia," in Encyclopedia of Ukraine Vol.I (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 256, estimated 20,000 Ukrainian émigres in this province of Czechoslovakia alone.

[25] Simpson, The Refugee Problem, 413.

[26] Some 2,000 Ukrainians arrived in the spring of 1932, in response to Stalin's collectivization campaign.

## Other Eastern Ukrainian refugees

Ukrainian refugees associated with Baron Petr Wrangel's army represented a less distinguishable group, consisting of draftees into the White units he commanded when these overran Ukrainian territories and including a heavy contingent of Kuban Cossacks. Sir John Hope Simpson, who conducted a survey of postwar refugees, obliquely acknowledged their existence in a single reference. "It is not possible," he wrote, "to say what part of the military and civilian evacuation from the Crimea following the defeat of Wrangel was Ukrainian, but after its distribution throughout the Balkans, certain differences arose within the ranks of the refugee community."[27] Differences among the nationally diverse White refugees did indeed surface with the passage of time. In Bulgaria, where one observer claimed that up to 90 per cent of emigrants from the former Russian empire were ethnically Ukrainian (although not necessarily nationally conscious), Ukrainians maintained an active organizational life distinct from the Russians.[28] In Egypt, another asylum for émigrés from the former Russian empire, Ukrainians formed independent organizations well documented by local community leaders even though the League of Nations did not find any Ukrainians among the several thousand "Russian" refugees it reported there.[29] Exactly how many Ukrainians were among an estimated two million refugees from the old Romanov territories by November 1920 -- or among the 400,000 to one-half million who remained spread over twenty-six European countries in 1930[30] -- is unknown. But the Bulgarian and Egyptian examples suggest that the number has been seriously underestimated and the Russian figure correspondingly inflated.

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[27] Simpson, The Refugee Problem, 114.

[28] Ukrainskyi emigrant, 15 September 1931; Ukrainske slovo, 15 December 1935.

### Resettlement of Ukrainian refugees

As already indicated, the Ukrainian refugee resettlement process frequently involved several stages. Experienced farmers dispersed in the Balkans, for instance, attempted to establish themselves in agriculture wherever they could: from farming colonies established in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, many Cossacks moved to France. In France, some refugees looked overseas for land, especially to countries in South America, as Canada and the United States actively discouraged indigent eastern European immigrants.[31]

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[29] Hryts Vozhok, *Ukraintsi v Iehypti* (Regensburg: Ukrainske slovo, 1946). More elusive are sources dealing with the organizational efforts of Ukrainian refugees in Yugoslavia where the Kuban Cossacks were well represented; Simpson, *The Refugee Problem*, 420, 422.

[30] Eugene M. Kulischer, *Europe on the Move: War and Population Changes, 1917-47* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), 54; and Simpson, *The Refugee Problem*, 109.

[31] Robert H. Johnston, *"New Mecca, New Babylon": Paris and the Russian Exiles, 1920-1945* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1988), 23.

South American governments anxious to colonize sparsely settled regions of their countries more than compensated for North American indifference or resistance to the plight of the refugees. Colonization agents from Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay freely promulgated emigration to their countries among the refugees in Europe and found willing recruits. The League of Nations negotiated with several European and South American governments to assist in resettlement. Russian émigré leaders themselves responded to the yearning for land among their countrymen; they not only discussed the prospects of relocation to South America in the émigré press but also set up colonization agencies such as the Russian Emigration Association for Settlement in South America, centred in Paris.[32] It was to groups such as this that Ukrainian refugees turned in the absence of their own organizations.

In the early 1920s many Ukrainian refugees travelled with documents issued by the government-in-exile of the UNR. These papers were widely accepted internationally until recognition of the new Soviet state gained momentum, although France continued to regard them as valid until 1926. In Poland Ukrainian refugees received either League of Nations Nansen certificates or the 'Titre d'identité et de voyage,' preferring the latter because they did not have to be classified as Russians. After 1928 all documentation provided to Ukrainian refugees arbitrarily listed "Russian" as their nationality. This official suppression of their ethnic origin has made it extremely difficult to plot their migration paths, although it is virtually certain that the "Russian" intake of many overseas countries included significant numbers of Ukrainians.

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[32] Simpson, *The Refugee Problem*, 479, 482; Johnston, *"New Mecca, New Babylon"*, 81; and *Russkii v Argentine*, 17 February 1935.

## Re-emigration in the early post-war years to Western Ukraine

The Eastern Ukrainian refugees who resettled overseas were soon joined by or encountered on arrival a new wave of emigrants from Western Ukraine augmenting colonies established before the war. But this renewed movement abroad was preceded by a modest reverse trend among the earlier generation of Western Ukrainian emigrants. Prior to 1922, when the borders of the new states governing Western Ukraine -- Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia -- were defined and emigration resumed, re-emigration appears to have been more important, especially to Eastern Galicia in Poland. Between mid December 1919 and mid January 1920 alone the General Consulate of the Polish Republic in Montreal issued 1,300 passports to individuals, including 930 Ukrainians and 230 Poles, who intended to return home.[33] The high rate of re-emigration among Ukrainians, three times that of Poles in 1919, has been attributed by one student of Polish emigration to Ukraine's struggle for independence and the desire to return to a liberated homeland. When it became clear that Poland would be the new, internationally recognized master of Galicia, re-emigration declined steadily until bottoming out in 1922.[34]

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[33] Edward Kolodziej, "Emigration from II Polish Republic to America on Background of Employment Seeking Emigration Process from Poland," in *Emigration from Northern, Central and Southern Europe: Theoretical and Methodological Principles of Research* (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellonskiego,

## Ukrainian emigration from Romania

Of the states governing Western Ukraine between the wars, Romania was the most precise in distinguishing Ukrainian emigrants from others, although the data are incomplete for some years. Although data do not exist for the early 1920s, in 1926 Brazil was the principal receiving country for Ukrainian emigrants from Romania, favoured over Canada by more than two to one. Given Canada's reluctance to accept new immigrants in light of postwar recession and antipathy towards eastern Europeans in particular, it is altogether conceivable that the "Brazilian fever" which had gripped the Galician peasantry in the mid 1890s recurred in the early 1920s, but in Bukovyna and Bessarabia. Bukovynian Ukrainians had settled in Brazil prior to the war so the country was not entirely terra incognita. In the second half of the 1920s, once Canada relaxed immigration controls and even encouraged Ukrainian settlement, the

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1983), 175.

[34] Jacob Lestschinsky, "National Groups in Polish Emigration," Jewish Social Studies 5 (1943): 106.

Dominion replaced Brazil as the most popular destination. The Depression impelled Canada to close its doors, but Ukrainian immigration from Romania resumed on a smaller scale when restrictions were again eased in the late 1930s, although Paraguay emerged as a serious competitor. Emigration to Argentina and Uruguay was not insignificant in the 1920s, and it would be logical to conclude that emigration patterns in adjacent territories in neighbouring Poland influenced the choice of South American countries other than Brazil. An increasingly isolationist and nativistic United States introduced immigration quotas in 1924, alloting Romania a mere 603 persons annually, so that the republic was an unrealistic option for Ukrainians from Bukovyna and Bessarabia seeking a fresh start overseas.[35]

Land shortages in both Bukovyna and Bessarabia, aggravated by grants to veterans and disabled soldiers from outside the area,[36] were a major factor inducing the Ukrainian exodus and go far towards explaining why the emigrants chose the destinations they did. Possibilities for land acquisition abroad were widely reported in the Western Ukrainian press, especially *Ukrainskyi emigrant* in Lviv, throughout the interwar years; meanwhile, emigration agents working on behalf of both Brazil and Canada also toured Romania promising discontented Ukrainians land. That Ukrainians listened is illustrated by the district school inspector who complained in a 1927 official report about the increased movement to Brazil and Canada from localities in Bukovyna and Bessarabia following the dissemination of agents' propaganda.[37]

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[35] For a record of the emigration patterns of Ukrainians from Romania, see Table 1 in my article, "In Search of a New Home: Ukrainian Emigration Patterns Between the Two World Wars," Journal of Ukrainian Studies 16, nos. 1-2 (1991): 9-10.

[36] Myron Gulka-Tiechko, "Inter-war Ukrainian Immigration to Canada, 1919-1939" (M.A. thesis, University of Manitoba, 1983), 56.

For their part, some local Ukrainian newspapers frowned upon large-scale emigration and the intensity of the agitation in its favour. *Ridnyi krai* in Chernivtsi, the Bukovynian capital, rebuked those agents who descended on Ukrainian districts and incited desperate villagers to uproot without a clear picture of what work, if any, they would find in Brazil. The newspaper stressed that the South American nation was not like Canada or the United States and painted it as a backward country teeming with dangerous reptiles and other wildlife. "There is nothing in Brazil for our people," it said; "let it collapse without us."[38] The role of such reports in deterring the people from Brazil and influencing the marked swing towards Canada in the late 1920s is impossible to determine. What is certain is that the thrust of the unofficial emigration campaign appears to have centred exclusively on Brazil and Canada. At the same time, Romania did raise the matter of emigration with other countries overseas. In 1929, for example, *Ukrainskyi emigrant* reported discussions to settle two thousand families (approximately ten thousand persons) on vacant land in Honduras; the newspaper anticipated that land-starved Bukovynian Ukrainians would like to participate in the venture.[39]

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[37] See Derzhavnyi arkhiv Chernivetskoi oblasti, fond 213, opys 1, sprava 3346.

[38] *Ridnyi krai,* 7 February 1926.

Unlike Poland and Czechoslovakia, Romania does not seem to have specifically promoted temporary work-related migration to other European countries. It tended instead to direct what seasonal labour there was to other regions of Romania. Trends in two Bukovynian villages suggest that between the wars emigration overseas appealed to both a minority of those wanting to improve their livelihood and to the more affluent. While some 50 individuals left Kamianka for Canada, Brazil, and Argentina, 230 were recruited for seasonal work elsewhere in Romania. In Putyla, the poorest able-bodied persons were the ones most likely to engage in seasonal labour in the Romanian lumber industry, while those somewhat better off (and able to afford the steamship ticket) tended to move further afield to the Americas.[40]

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[39] *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, 15 November 1929.

[40] V.M. Kurylo, et al., eds., *Istoriia mist i sil URSR: Chernivetska oblast* (Kyiv: Holovna Redaktsiia Ukrainskoi Radianskoi Entsyklopedii AN URSR, 1969), 206, 467.

### Ukrainian emigration from Czechoslovakia

The Ukrainian emigration from Czechoslovakia, namely the region of Transcarpathia, was not substantial and represented only a fraction of the exodus that occurred before 1914. The data for measuring the magnitude of the movement and its distribution are also regrettably sparse. Czechoslovakian statistics, available for only part of the 1920s, record emigration from the country as a whole by year and destination, but as a rule do not differentiate the emigrants by nationality. References to "Ruthenians" are limited to a single block period, the years 1924-1928, when 2,236 Ukrainians were said to have emigrated to various European countries and an additional 2,913 to destinations overseas.[41] If these figures are compared with emigration statistics for Transcarpathia for approximately the same period (1922-1928), the picture of Ukrainian emigration patterns becomes clearer. Although not all those departing from the region were Ukrainians, they would likely have constituted the majority, since Ukrainians formed 70 per cent of Transcarpathia's population. Between 1922 and 1927 a total of 4,784 persons left Transcarpathia for overseas: 2,391 to the United States, 1,481 to Canada, 776 to Argentina, 58 to Central America and Cuba, 66 to other South American countries, and 4 to miscellaneous destinations. In 1928 a further 1,490 persons emigrated from the region: 792 to Canada, 421 to Argentina, 205 to the United States, 10 to Brazil, 10 to Central America and Cuba, 51 to other South American countries, and a single person elsewhere.[42]

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[41] *Statisticky prehled Respubliky Ceskoslovenske: Sestavil Statni urad statisticky* (Prague: Bursik & Kohout, 1930), 49.

Local histories of Transcarpathia also hint at the emigration patterns of Ukrainians from Czechoslovakia. For instance, in the village of Nelipyne, where 47 per cent of the population was reportedly landless, a mass exodus of the rural poor in the mid 1920s went to Brazil. In the village of Pylypets seasonal migration was more important, directed to the coal mines of Belgium, France, and the United States. Residents of Dubrynych and Dibrova also left for Belgium and France, but preferred Latin America as their overseas destination.[43] The important relationship between seasonal migration and permanent relocation abroad remains elusive, hampered by a dearth of source material.

### Ukrainian emigration from Poland

Emigration from Poland represented by far the most important interwar movement of Western Ukrainians. Moreover, the Polish government actively influenced emigration patterns -- by implementing an emigration policy that had explicit ramifications for Ukrainians, and by entering into agreements with other states. Ukrainian community activists also reacted to the flight of their compatriots and alerted potential emigrants both to the implications of leaving the homeland and to their options abroad. International political developments and changing immigration regulations in various would-be receiving countries constituted a final influence on the course of Ukrainian emigration.

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[42] Ibid., 48.

[43] V.I. Bielousov, et al., eds., *Istoriia mist i sil URSR: Zakarpatska oblast* (Kyiv: Holovna Redaktsiia Ukrainskoi Radianskoi Entsyklopedii AN URSR, 1969), 565, 365, 458, 60.

Polish studies of interwar emigration from Poland identify unprecedented population growth, a problematic land-tenure system (with constant subdivision of plots among an ever increasing number of heirs), the absence of agrarian reform, and industrial stagnation unable to absorb the jobless as the primary factors inducing a mass movement to other countries. Exacerbating the situation was the massive repatriation of Polish "citizens" from abroad, surpassing a million and a half individuals by 1928.[44] While acknowledging that these conditions existed, Ukrainian scholars and community commentators have added a fourth factor -- calculated policies of the Polish regime designed to undermine the Ukrainian minority -- that drove Ukrainians to emigrate in large numbers. For example, the estates of the Orthodox church, expropriated in 1925, were redistributed among Polish colonists, not local Ukrainians, with the result that 300,000 Poles received 800,000 hectares of land in Western Ukraine.[45] The issue of evaluating emigration within the context of broader state strategies towards Ukrainians became more controversial after the violent Polish "pacification" of Ukrainian villages in the summer and autumn of 1930 in reprisal for growing militancy against Polish rule. One contemporary observer interpreted the pacification, together with the importation of Polish colonists into Ukrainian territories, as part of an attempt to create a homogeneous Polish society and restore historical Poland from the Baltic to the Black Seas.[46] Writing to the Polish consul-general in Montreal in 1937 to air several complaints, a senior Canadian immigration official endorsed the Ukrainian view of exploitative and discriminatory Polish policies:

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[44] See, for example, Alfred Wielopolski, *L'Emigration polonaise en Amerique du Sud* (Fribourg: L'oeuvre de Saint Paul, 1931), 2-7; Zbigniew Landau, "The Employment-Seeking Emigration from the Second Republic, 1918-1939: Selected Topics," in Celina Bobinska and Andrzej Pilch, eds., *Employment-Seeking Emigration of the Poles World-Wide XIX and XXc* (Cracow 1975), 105; and Kolodziej, "Emigration from II Polish Republic to America," 168.

> **Ukranian [sic] farmers who have land and want to sell it and leave Poland are encouraged to do so by Poland. The government sets the price and sees that the amount is very little more**

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[45] Gulka-Tiechko, "Inter-war Ukrainian Immigration to Canada," 49. See also, for example, Alexander Motyl, "The Ukrainian Nationalist Movement and the Galician Reality," Meta 1 (Fall 1975): 55; and Orest Subtelny, Ukraine: A History, 433.

[46] V.J. Kushnir, Polish Atrocities in the West Ukraine: An Appeal to the League for the Rights of Man and Citizen (Vienna: Gerold & Co., 1931), 48, 54-55. See also Novyi chas, 10 April 1936 and 9 April 1938.

> **than will pay passage and allow $1,000.00 to be taken out of the country. They also see that the land sold by the Ukranian farmers falls into the hands of a Polish settler. By one operation they therefore get rid of a Ukranian, replace him on the land by a Pole, fix the price that the Ukranian gets for his land and by routing this business into the hands of the Polish Line get back from the Ukranian a considerable part of the price of his land by selling him transportation on the National Line.**[47]

Whether or not Poland was genuinely concerned about the plight of the peasantry and the unemployed, and whether or not it wished to rid itself of a problematic minority by exporting the problem abroad, a consensus did exist that emigration could effectively mitigate admitted widespread rural poverty. Emigration was in fact seen to have multiple benefits, not the least of which was reducing Poland's labour surplus while increasing its material wealth through the money the emigrants remitted. Seasonal migration, in particular, yielded much-needed cash.[48] The permanent resettlement abroad of whole families, who took all their assets with them, was less desirable, and in 1936, as emigration began to assume greater importance with the decline of seasonal migration, Poland limited the amount of capital a family could remove from the country. Nevertheless, there were compensating factors to permanent emigration: hopes of increased trade, a "Polish" presence abroad, and the release of pressure on land in the countryside.

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[47] F.C. Blair, cited in Gulka-Tiechko, "Inter-war Ukrainian Immigration to Canada," 292.

[48] See, for example, Wielopolski, *L'Emigration polonaise*, 9.

Management of the emigration process involved an intricate interplay among legislative, diplomatic, and other official and non-official agencies. These included the State Council, which functioned as a consultative organ of the Ministry of Labour and Social Assistance; the Parliamentary Commission for Emigration Affairs; the State Emigration Bureau, initially more concerned with repatriation; and, after the Bureau's abolition in 1932, the Inter-Ministerial Commission for Emigration which promoted its activities through the Polish Emigration Syndicate. An institute to study emigration and colonization affairs was established in 1926, and beginning in 1929 world congresses of Poles abroad were held in Warsaw. In addition, a number of voluntary associations dedicated to emigration matters received some support from the government. Article 201 of the 1921 Polish Constitution guaranteed the country's citizens freedom of emigration, but a 1927 decree empowered the Ministry of Labour and Social Assistance to halt emigration to certain countries in order to protect "the life, liberty, and economic and moral interests of the emigrants." In 1928 a person was forbidden to emigrate unless he or she had a definite job waiting and sufficient means to settle in a new country. Recruitment of individuals for paid seasonal work or colonization schemes was subject to approval by the Ministry of Labour and Social Assistance or the Ministry of

Agrarian Reform on the recommendation of the State Emigration Bureau.[49]

Throughout the interwar period, but particularly in the 1920s, seasonal migration within Europe drew Polish citizens by the hundreds of thousands. For Ukrainians such cyclical work was no novelty. According to one source, seasonal migration from Western Ukrainian territories to Germany alone had involved some 75,000 people annually between 1907 and 1912. The number of Ukrainians engaged in temporary work in Germany peaked at 114,253 in 1913, when they made up the majority of labourers from the Austrian crownlands.[50] Between the wars Poles dominated seasonal migration from Poland, while Ukrainians favoured permanent resettlement abroad. As one historian explained: "The national minorities, for whom conditions in Poland were none too happy, were more inclined to emigrate to countries where they could settle for good, whereas the Polish majority those from which they could easily return."[51]

The resettlement of Polish citizens in South America, especially Brazil, where many Poles and Ukrainians already lived, figured prominently in interwar Polish emigration policy. In the early 1920s, observing the rapid rise of repatriation to Poland from North America, the Polish consul-general in Montreal, J. Okolowicz, proposed that those wishing to return instead be encouraged to relocate in the state of Paraná, Brazil, instead, to bolster the local Polish (and although he didn't mention it, Ukrainian) presence. While this never evolved into a formal policy, in 1924-1925 the Polish government began to take an active interest in Latin America -- notably Brazil, Argentina, and Chile -- for wage-earning opportunities and land settlement. Mexico and Peru were initially seriously considered also, but the colonization experiments the Polish government supervised in the latter failed. As the Great Depression prompted Canada to cut immigration, the Inter-Ministerial Commision for Emigration focused almost exclusively on South America, favouring those areas with existing Polish and/or Ukrainian communities. Nonetheless, in the late 1930s agreements were concluded with countries where there were few or no Ukrainians: for example, Paraguay, to settle Polish citizens (the overwhelming majority ethnic Ukrainians) in Itapúa bordering on Misiones, and with Bolivia and Ecuador to found Ukrainian colonies specifically.[52]

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[49] Ibid., 11-14; and Maria Teresa Koreywo-Rybczynska, "Polityka Polski wobec emigracji w Ameryce Lacinskiej," in Marcin Kula, ed., *Dzieje Polonii w Ameryce Lacinskiej* (Wroclaw: Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1983), 454-455, 462.

[50] Kubijovyc and Markus, "Emigration," 821; and Lestschinsky, "National Groups in Polish Emigration," 102.

[51] Lestschinsky, "National Groups in Polish Emigration," 104.

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[52] Koreywo-Rybczynska, "Polityka Polski wobec emigracji w Ameryce Lacinskiej," 455-73.

By the mid 1920s, when Canada began to take an interest in immigration from Poland, it was mainly the country's Ukrainian citizens who responded, especially after the Railways' Agreement implemented in the autumn of 1925 removed restrictions on eastern Europeans. Until then, "the absence of both an active promotional campaign and any organized network to assist prospective immigrants in obtaining sponsors in Canada, militated against a large in-migration of settlers."[53] The Ukrainian Canadian community played a vital role in bringing its compatriots to Canada. The most active group was St. Raphael's Ukrainian Immigrants' Welfare Association, founded in Winnipeg in 1925, which collaborated closely with the Ukrainian Emigrant Protection Society (UEPS) in Lviv. When Canada ceased being a viable option in the 1930s, St. Raphael followed the example of its counterpart in Lviv and shifted its attention to Latin American countries that might be persuaded to accept those Ukrainians who could no longer gain entry to Canada.[54]

The voluntary associations concerned with emigration matters that sprang up in Poland tended to be organized according to nationality (Polish, Jewish, etc). Prior to the First World War, the St. Raphael Galician and Bukovynian Emigrant Aid

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[53] Gulka-Tiechko, "Inter-war Ukrainian Immigration to Canada," 77-78.

[54] Ibid., 246.

Society, founded in Lviv in 1907 as a branch of the Austrian St. Raphael Society, had served Ukrainian interests. Its organ, *Emigrant*, which appeared between 1910 and 1914, covered both seasonal migration within Europe (particularly to Germany, Denmark, and Sweden) and overseas emigration (especially to Brazil and Canada). In the 1920s such endeavours were resumed. *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, published intermittently from 1923 initially in runs of 3,200 copies (reduced to 2,000 in the 1930s), evolved into the official organ of the UEPS and is an indispensable source on Ukrainian emigration from Poland between the wars.

The UEPS was formed in 1924, apparently because of concern about the flow of Ukrainians to Latin America,[55] although the society ironically later promoted the area. In its inaugural newsletter the UEPS maintained that its policy was not to encourage emigration but to see that the movement which did occur was properly managed, that emigrants were advised as to the best destination, and that they received protection against exploitation by unscrupulous agents. It also printed a questionnaire, perhaps never distributed, designed to determine the root causes of emigration.[56]

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[55] Ibid., 112.

[56] Derzhavnyi arkhiv Lvivskoi oblasti, fond 1, opys 33, od. zb. 2448, ark. 26-27.

By 1930 the UEPS was an affiliate of the Geneva-based International Conference of Organizations for the Protection of Migrations and maintained offices in four districts in Galicia: Lviv, Ternopil, Stanyslaviv, and Sambir.[57] It offered a wide range of services, furnishing prospective emigrants with information on Poland's emigration laws, opportunities abroad, the intended country of settlement, and procedures for obtaining travel and other documents. It also assisted with the specifics of contracts, rentals, inheritance laws, loans, and application forms. This anxiety over Ukrainian emigrants leaving their homeland without guidance was understandable. Many UEPS staff members were old enough to remember the "Brazilian fever" of 1895-1896, when Galician villagers, ignorant of the conditions that awaited them, had departed for the virgin forests of South America only to meet a tragic end.[58] Everyone's worst fears seemed to be confirmed when emigration in the early 1920s again assumed something of a chaotic character and emigrants were lured to countries about which they had little, if any, accurate information.

While North America had been the principal destination for Ukrainian emigrants before 1914 under liberal entry laws, between the wars the United States in particular tightened access. With alternatives for overseas relocation often unclear, and employment opportunities in the countries accepting immigrants unknown, many potential emigrants simply stayed home.[59] Others, determined to leave, assessed their options carefully before undertaking such a major step as uprooting and re-establishing abroad. Yet others, albeit a minority, reasoned that if they could not enter the United States through the front door they should try their luck through the back entrance. A number of Ukrainians were misled to believe that they could scramble illegally into the United States by way of Cuba and Mexico, taking advantage of the fact that these countries, unlike the U.S., did not require an affidavit from a close relative who was already a citizen.[60]

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[57] *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, January 1930.

[58] For an overview of Ukrainian settlement in Brazil, see Serge Cipko, "The Legacy of the 'Brazilian Fever': The Ukrainian Colonization of Paraná," *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 11, no.2 (Winter 1986): 19-32.

In an attempt to prevent spontaneous mass movement to countries where emigrants would be especially vulnerable, the UEPS, its organ *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, and the Ukrainian press in general routinely assessed and reassessed opportunities abroad. Press reviews of the options overseas were frequently mixed, could change over time, and pitted one country against another. In 1927, for instance, the Volynian *Narodnyi visnyk* compared Canada and Argentina, then the two most popular destinations for local emigrants. It remarked on high unemployment in Canada due to too many immigrants for the jobs available and suggested that prospects were better in Argentina, particularly the northern frontier provinces of Misiones, Chaco, and Formosa.[61] *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, however, was the prospective emigrant's major source of information and advice. Also in 1927, it informed readers that entry into the United States was next to impossible and into Canada expensive, but that Argentina merited serious consideration. Land existed for purchasing and there was the added bonus of free rail transportation, seeds for planting, and wood for building. In 1929 *Ukrainskyi emigrant* advised that opportunities for homesteading were less favourable in Uruguay (where land was expensive) than in Brazil, but that Uruguay nevertheless needed workers for cattle slaughtering, sheep shearing, construction, public works, and domestic service. At the same time, the newspaper cautioned that only those with family and friends already in Uruguay and able to offer temporary support should consider going. Coverage of Paraguay was less positive, and *Ukrainskyi emigrant* recommended that emigration be limited to individuals with enough funds to maintain themselves over an indefinite period as land was expensive and Ukrainian farm labourers could not compete with local workers. In the early 1930s both Argentina and Brazil were deemed good places to go as land was plentiful and relatively cheap, Ukrainian communities already existed to assist the newcomers both emotionally and materially, and Argentina had specifically announced new regulations (1933) giving priority in admission to immigrants who wished to settle on the land. Uruguay declined as a potential destination because of new restrictions, while Paraguay and Bolivia were at war. Finally, the newspaper remarked that letters received from immigrants in Brazil sounded less desperate than those from Canada.[62]

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[59] Landau, "The Employment-Seeking Emigration from the Second Republic," 106.

[60] On the fate of the Ukrainian immigrants in Mexico, see *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, 5 January 1929 and 15 March 1928; on Cuba, *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, 27 October 1927.

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[61] *Narodnyi visnyk*, 11 August 1927.

In 1935 the UEPS presented a balance sheet on the status of both emigration and seasonal migration. It noted that wage-earning opportunities anywhere were now limited, with the partial exception of France. Canada no longer encouraged the settlement of farm families, and it cost thousands of dollars to set up in agriculture there. The situation was better in Argentina, where one could begin farming with only $500, and Brazil, where land was even cheaper and the annual quota for Polish citizens favoured farmers. The United States would admit only the wives, husbands, and children of American citizens; Canada accepted relatives of immigrants already in the country in addition to farmers possessing $1000 with which to establish themselves on the land. Admission to Brazil required an affidavit and 1,200 zloty, admission to Argentina either an affidavit or 2,300 zloty; the money in both cases was earmarked for the purchase of land.[63]

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[62] See, for example, *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, 1 April 1927, 15 May 1929, 30 December 1929, 1 January 1930, 30 June 1930, 15 August 1931, 15 February 1932, 30 April 1932, 30 September 1932, 15 October 1932, 30 November 1932, 30 June 1933.

What impact the cumulative reports in the Western Ukrainian press had on prospective emigrants is difficult to ascertain. Undoubtedly, knowledge of the countries that individuals contemplated making their new homes would have been enhanced and the ultimate decision on uprooting might reasonably have been swayed by what was read in the pages of community newspapers. The more intimate letters received from relatives already abroad, together with government policy and the agitation of emigration agents, also of course influenced the decision-making process. How (and if) prospective emigrants responded to the circulation of news about opportunities overseas can be determined to some extent from requests for advice sent to the UEPS between 1928 and 1935. Categorized by country, these requests were recorded in *Ukrainskyi emigrant* and are revealing, pointing to shifts in emigration patterns within specific time frames.[64]

In 1928 Canada was the subject of most requests, while South

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[63] Ibid., September 1935, December 1935; also 15 May 1934.

[64] For the data pertaining to these requests, see Tables 2-4 in my article, "In Search of a New Home."

America hardly figured and France and Germany, the recipients of ongoing seasonal migration, had a significant number of requests for information. By 1933 enquiries about Canada and Germany had declined markedly, those about France less so, and South America (especially Argentina) now attracted the bulk of the attention, a trend that persisted into 1935. The change in emphasis reflected prospective emigrants' own perceptions of where the potential opportunities lay at a particular moment, taking into account revisions in the immigration policies of countries traditionally open to Ukrainian settlers, Poland's own emigration policy, and the coverage given to emigration developments in the Ukrainian press. The fact that these requests were made at all demonstrates that many would-be emigrants, although by no means a majority of those who actually left, were turning to outside agencies such as the UEPS before embarking on their move. The requests refer only to anticipated or hypothetical destinations, and do not indicate if emigrants ever changed their minds. For some, the goal was simply to relocate, and views as to where that might be were not necessarily fixed. Incidents before departure, during the journey, or after arrival could alter earlier perceptions or plans, so that the man with the bad experience in Canada moved to Argentina, or the Volynian who initially intended to go to Uruguay ultimately chose Alberta when negative reports from former villagers in the South American country clashed with his sister's enthusiastic letters from

Canada.[65] The frequency of relocation from one country to another is an important but little known phenomenon. In the case of Canada, the United States was the magnet,[66] and within South America, Argentina was singularly the most popular target of relocation from neighbouring countries, as shall be discussed in a later chapter.

In providing the wider context for Ukrainian emigration to Argentina in the interwar period, a guide to the numbers that moved to this country compared to others is in order. Contemporary Polish statistics did not not identify emigrants by nationality and only with 1927 did they differentiate immigrants by religious affiliation. Table 1 below specifies the number of Greek Catholics and Orthodox who emigrated to assorted countries in 1927-1938. Most Ukrainians were either Greek Catholic or Orthodox, constituting the overwhelming majority of adherents in the Greek Catholic church and a majority in the Orthodox church.

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[65] See Grooming the Grizzly: A History of Wanham and Area (Wanham, Alberta: Birch Hills Historical Society, 1982), 557; and Ukrainskyi emigrant, 15 September 1933

[66] See under the headings for "Ruthenians" and "Russians" in Wilcox, International Migrations, vol.1 (New York: Gordon and Breeech Science Publishers, 1969), 468.

## TABLE 1

## EMIGRATION FROM POLAND, 1927-1938

| | Greek Catholic | Orthodox |
|---|---|---|
| Argentina | 20,000 | 25,100 |
| Belgium | 200 | - |
| Brazil | 2,800 | 5,900 |
| Canada | 35,300 | 10,500 |
| Estonia | - | 2,200 |
| France | 41,600 | 3,400 |
| Germany | 7,900 | 200 |
| Lithuania | 2,100 | 29,300 |
| Paraguay | 900 | 8,800 |
| United States | 2,000 | 1,000 |
| Other European | 1,699 | 400 |
| Other Overseas | 600 | 700 |
| Total | 115,000 | 87,500 |

Source: Maly Rocznik Statystyczny 1939 Warsaw, 1939, 53.

### Conclusion

Finally, what conclusions can be reached with respect to the phenomenon of interwar Ukrainian emigration, and which of the social science conceptual frameworks can best be applied to interpret its context? An immediate conclusion refers to the heterogeneity of the emigrants: because they represented different types of emigrants (refugees, seasonal, and transatlantic), it is difficult to present a single category for them. Nor do such popular migration theoretical frameworks as the economic equilibrium or the "push-pull" models[67] lend themselves to fully explaining complex interplaying factors that characterized the process of Ukrainian emigration. The multicausal model posited by anthropologist Brian M. du Toit and others comes closest to defining the context of this resettlement abroad. Those who argue in favour of this model do so from the premise that "a process as complex as the relocation of an individual cannot be explained solely on economic, personal, educational, or residential grounds."[68] Factors at the area of origin, destination and in between both, along with personal decision-making, are examined as a "multicausal nexus of influences."[69] There are several advantages to the multicausal approach. First, it allows for greater flexibility in examining the reasons and process of emigration by placing the ultimate importance on personal decision-making. As du Toit asserts, "Human actions must be understood in human terms."[70] Second, the model makes allowances for variables in the process of emigration, taking into account such differences as the backgrounds and personalities of the emigrants, the resources at their disposal, among others. And third, the model places greater

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[67] Such theories find expression in Philip Martin's "The Migration Issue," in Russel King, ed., The New Geography of European Migrations (New York and London: Belhaven Press, 1993), 4-5, which places the primacy of economic factors over others. A variant of these theories can be found in Stella Hryniuk's study, "Peasant Agriculture in East Galicia in the

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departure.

[68] Brian M. du Toit, "People on the Move: Rural-urban Migration with Special Reference to the Third World: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives," *Human Organization* 49, no.4 (1990): 311.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid., 312.

attention on what happens at the journey itself, between the points of origin and destination, than do other analytical frameworks. The importance of step-migration and relocations from one country to another has been alluded to earlier in the chapter and will continue to be a theme in those that follow. Here it is pertinent to note that an undefined, but significant portion of the immigrants who went to Argentina, for instance, did not do so directly from their homeland. From a sample that could be culled from the obituaries of interwar Ukrainian immigrants (see Table 18 in Chapter Five), it is quite evident that a number of immigrants moved to Argentina after having settled first in another country. The places of foreign residence of this group before arrival in Argentina was varied: Czechoslovakia (7 individuals from the sample), Brazil (5), Paraguay (4), Romania (3), France (3), Germany (3), Belgium (2), and Switzerland (1). A smaller number are said to have emigrated from Europe to either Canada or the United States before World War I, prior to resettling in Argentina. At least one immigrant had travelled across half the globe before deciding to put roots down in Argentina. Vasyl Zhurkivsky, a Bukovynian, had before World War I spent his student days in Germany and the United States, where he earned a doctorate in philosophy. To deepen his knowledge of the subject he decided to visit China and India. His sojourn in India coincided with the war period and the British authorities there arrested him as a citizen of Austria (as indicated on his passport) -- an enemy alien, an "offense" for which he was taken to Australia and interned. On his release from the internment camp in Australia, after the war, he settled on the Spanish island of Mallorca where he met his Swiss bride, and relocated to Switzerland before emigrating to Argentina in 1936.[71]

Zhurkivsky's story and others related in this chapter suggest that while there were definite influences such as local state policy, economic considerations, the dissemination of information, immigration laws, etc., the ultimate decision to emigrate rested with the individual upon an evaluation of options and these, as well as the process of emigration, were not strictly uniform from case to case.

Ukrainian interwar emigrants to Argentina arrived in a country which already had a Ukrainian history. This history is recounted in the following chapter, and serves the purpose of demonstrating the characteristics of the first wave of Ukrainian immigration to distinguish and link this immigration with the larger one that followed.

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[71] *Nash klych*, 17 October 1942.

# CHAPTER TWO

# EARLY UKRAINIAN IMMIGRATION INTO ARGENTINA

When Ukrainians journeyed to Argentina in the period between the two World Wars, they departed from communities now long accustomed to the phenomenon of overseas migration. And as many disembarked at the seaport of Buenos Aires, Argentina's federal capital and entrepot, they encountered a city where in 1914 42% of the population, like themselves, were foreign-born.[72]

They were not the first wave of Ukrainian immigrants to reach the shores of the River Plate region; other Ukrainians, bearing Austro-Hungarian or Russian passports, had by up to two decades or more preceded them.

## The first settlers

The date of the arrival of the first Ukrainian settlers in Argentina has traditionally been fixed as 27 August 1897, when a mixed Ukrainian-Polish contingent of 14 families comprising 69 individuals (including a later addition of an Italian), hailing from the Austrian crownland of Galicia, settled in the province of Misiones and founded a farming colony nearby the old Jesuit site of Apostoles. It is this founding event that the contemporary Argentine Ukrainian community commemorates as the advent of Ukrainian settlement in Argentina. Ironically, the original intention of these pioneers was not to go to Argentina at all; rather, it was the United States they had hoped to reach, the destination for the majority of their compatriots then emigrating and where some even had relatives. Their problems began in the port of Hamburg, Germany, when a U.S. immigration medical team inspecting them for health infirmities rejected the group. A steamship employee, a fellow Galician, upon learning of their plight, suggested that they try Argentina instead.[73] Arriving in 1896 and housed in the *Hotel de Inmigrantes* of Buenos Aires, the immigrants' attempts to purchase land in its environs proved fruitless; the price of the land was well beyond their financial means. Abraham Levy, an Argentine agronomist, describes how this group became destined for Misiones, then a National Territory:

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[72] Gino Germani, "Mass Immigration and Modernization in Argentina," in Irving Louis Horowitz, et. al., eds., *Latin American Radicalism: A Documentary Report on Left and Nationalist Movements* (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), 332.

> **[Juan José] Lanusse, the Governor [of Misiones] learned that 14 families of Poles and Ukrainians had recently been admitted to the *Hotel de Inmigrantes*. He interested and convinced the Director of Immigration to have them transferred to Misiones. Since they were settled in lands delineated by the government, their arrival in Apostoles is considered to be the initiation**

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[73] Estanislao Pyzik, *Los polacos en la República Argentina 1812-1900* (Buenos Aires: Imprenta López, 1944), 281.

**of the official colonization [of Misiones].[74]**

The original nucleus of 69 grew to 250 in the following year,[75] and the *colonia* served as a magnet for many thousands more Ukrainians to come in succeeding years. One of them, Maria Olexyn de Pauluk, recalls the circumstances that impelled her, at age 6, and her family to board a large steamship that docked in Buenos Aires in 1901:

> **We came from Europe....Over there we were really poor, with half or a quarter hectare of land, far too little, with nowhere to plant. And when we heard from Misiones that they were giving away much land, in our wretched state, we were eager to go there, and half the fare was free.[76]**

Such news that arrived from the first settlers set off a "chain-migration." Maria remembers that accompanying her immediate family to Argentina were other relatives, and all were joining kin who had preceded them. "We arrived at their home," she reminisces, "a thatched straw roof dwelling, with an oven inside around which we warmed ourselves." A touch of the "old country" in what was otherwise clearly a foreign landscape -- scattered settlers from a densely populated part of Europe in a subtropical, inhospitable corner of Argentina. The Governor, for his part, tried to facilitate the integration of his new guests. "An administrator came and reassured us: 'Don't panic, we will help you, things will go well for you here.' And in this way we were convinced." [77]

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[74] *Los colonos.* Programa elaborado por 'Organismo Provincial', Posadas, Argentina, 1986 (TV documentary).

[75] Ryszard Stemplowski, "Los eslavos en Misiones. Consideraciones en torno al número y la distribución geográfica de los campesinos polacos y ucranianos (1897-1938)," *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas* (Cologne) 19 (1982): 326.

[76] *Los colonos.*

The Governor and his aides did more than offer moral support. The first settlers were awarded land grants of 25 hectares or more and credits in the form of barns, domestic animals, seeds, tools, and other provisions, to be repaid to the state after a five-year period.[78]

The Misiones pioneers were not, however, the first Ukrainians to immigrate into Argentina. Mykhailo Vasylyk [Miguel Wasylyk], who thus far has written the most comprehensive study of Ukrainians in Argentina, albeit not entirely satisfactory (*ut infra*), suggests that there were Ukrainians in Argentina as early as the eighteenth century. He asserts that this is demonstrated in contemporary military and town census records, where, among the surnames listed are many which are typically Ukrainian.[79] A recurring problem in what was originally Vasylyk's Ph.D. thesis is the limited reference to sources, whether primary or secondary. Vasylyk's basis for his contention is Stanislao Pyzik's *Los polacos en la república Argentina y América del Sur* published in Buenos Aires in 1966, whose author he takes to task for claiming even such unmistakably Ukrainian surnames as Doroshenko as Polish.[80] While Vasylyk here clearly has a point, he himself has not proffered any positive data on these early "Slavic" settlers which could then resolve the issue of their true origins.

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[77] Ibid.

[78] Leopoldo José Bartolomé, *The Colonos of Apostoles: Adaptive Strategy and Ethnicity in a Polish-Ukrainian Settlement in Northeast Argentina* (New York: AMS Press, 1991), 118.

Meanwhile, Vasylyk's suggestion has been interpreted by some to elaborate their own theories as to the background of this possible first wave of Ukrainian immigrants. One community figure has speculated:

> **Researchers have affirmed that the first "unknown" Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina may have been our Cossacks of the late 17th and early 18th Centuries. When our Cossacks were in Spain (Zaragoza), it is possible that they were transferred to**

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[79] Mykhailo Vasylyk, *Ukrainski poselennia v Argentyni* (Munich: Ukrainische Freie Universitat, 1982), 133. This page is part of the Spanish summary of the book and here he asserts Ukrainian. But in the Ukrainian-language text, p.13, he is more cautious by referring to the surnames as "Slavic."

[80] Ibid., 13-14. Other surnames cited by Vasylyk include Badeliak, Bilevych, Chaikovsky, Dembitsky, Dobryi, Dunin-Borkovsky, Hrodnyi, Khodasevych, Mansovych, Moskovsky, Nedbalsky, Ostrovsky, Sadovsky, Semashko, Semyradzky, Shchikh, Shymansky, Stemashchuk, Sudnyk, Voinylovych, Vozniak, Vusetych, Vysotsky, Zhurovsky, Zilinsky.

**Argentina, given Argentina's colonial ties with Spain.**[81]

While this is an interesting theory, it must remain precisely that, since it is devoid of any documentary evidence to substantiate it.

While research still needs to be undertaken to determine how many of the Poles cited by Pyzik and other scholars as living in Argentina before the middle of the nineteenth century were actually Ukrainian, there is less ambiguity about the Ukrainian immigrants arriving at the turn of the twentieth century. The most concrete reference yet to the earliest known Ukrainian immigrant is a Canadian source. Reporting on one Mary Duchak's centenary in 1976, *The Edmonton Journal* stated that she emigrated to Argentina with her Ukrainian parents at age 5, signifying that the family arrived there in 1881, some 33 years before Mary relocated with her husband to Canada.[82] Still others preceded the arrival of the Apostoles pioneers by a number of years. José Szenczuk, an Unión Cívica Radical candidate for mayor in the 1991 Apostoles elections, related some interesting family lore. Barely 100 years ago his great grandfather boarded a ship bound for Canada. Deterred by that country's unattractive climate, he decided to board another headed for points south, that took him first to Brazil, which equally failed to impress him, and then to Argentina, where he finally disembarked in 1892. He found work in the province of Santa Fé, where an unpleasant experience made him anxious to leave the area and search further afield for employment. Still job-hunting in 1897, during one of his enquiries he learned that a number of his compatriots were establishing themselves on the land in the Territory of Misiones. At the close of the year he joined them, laying down roots in Apostoles.[83] José Szenczuk's great grandfather may well have been among the first Ukrainian immigrants in the province of Santa Fé, whose genesis in the province is otherwise dated to 1896 in Argentina's second major city, Rosario.[84]

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[81] *Ukrainski visti*, 11 February, 1987.

[82] *The Edmonton Journal,* 15 July 1976.

Also predating the Apostoles colonists, although only by a margin, was a group of 34 Ukrainian families from the district of Buchach in Galicia who settled in the province of Mendoza. Departing their homeland on the New Year of 1897, the first four immigrant families (the Hikawczuks, Pawlows, Trenkas and Gogols) arrived in Argentina late February of the same year. Three months later the other 30 families joined them. The families were sent to the district of Malargue in Mendoza and worked the land of General Rufino Ortega. But finding conditions in the vicinity unalluring, some relocated to the district of "25 de Mayo," others to the Department of San Martín, while the majority moved to Colonia Alvear Oeste, all in Mendoza.[85]

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[83] Related to me by José Szenczuk at his home on 12 August 1991. For a profile on Szenczuk, see the regional Unión Cívica Radical party paper, *Correligionario,* July 1991, 13.

[84] *Ukrainske slovo,* 31 March 1935.

A standard source on the history of Ukrainians in Argentina, while generally useful, is therefore not entirely precise when it affirms that "[The] origins of Ukrainian immigration to Argentina can be traced to 1897. In that year, six Ukrainian families, coming from Galicia via Brazil, arrived in the province of Misiones to the place now known as the town of ...Apostoles."[86]

## Regional distribution of the first immigrants

The extent of the distribution across Argentina of the early Ukrainian immigrants and their regional provenances, too, have not been fully assessed. Writers of the history of Ukrainian immigration into Argentina have traditionally distinguished two areas of pre-World War I Ukrainian settlement: Misiones and Buenos Aires-Berisso. As far as Misiones is concerned, the settlers are frequently said to be Galicians and the same writers imply that the immigrants in Buenos Aires and the town of Berisso were mainly of that background, too.[87]

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[85] *Ukrainske slovo*, 14 July 1968.

[86] E. Onatsky, "In Argentina," in Volodymyr Kubijovyc, ed., *Ukraine: A Concise Encyclopedia* Vol.II (Toronto: Ukrainian National Association, 1971), 1204.

Certainly, the success of the initial settlers in Misiones, all Galicians, as noted, triggered a chain-migration, which led to still more Galicians in the Territory. But it should not escape one's attention that the pioneering efforts of these first Galicians lured to the region not only fellow villagers, but immigrants of other ethnic backgrounds. Similarly, Ukrainians from other regions came to join their Galician compatriots in Misiones. Agitation in favour of Argentina had already commenced in 1896, when apparently Mykola Savchuk, described as a former editor of the newspaper *Selianyn*, offered his services to the German steamship firm, Missler, and conducted a propaganda campaign in Galicia and Bukovyna.[88] The incitement to emigrate to Argentina did not result in any parallel to the "Brazilian fever" of 1895-1896, when many thousands of peasants from the latter two regions flocked to Brazil. Indeed, the main Ukrainian periodical in the Austro-Hungarian Empire to cover emigration trends, *Emigrant*, in its issues between 1910 and 1914 rarely featured articles on Argentina, indicating, perhaps, that its sponsor, the St. Raphael Galician and Bukovynian Emigrant Aid Society based in Lviv, did not believe the numbers emigrating there sufficiently important to warrant special attention.

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[87] For instance, Mykhailo Vasylyk, "Argentina," in Volodymyr Kubijovyc, ed., *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* Vol.I (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 108, and *Ukraintsi v Argentyni*, 18; Onatsky, "In Argentina," 1205 expressed the common notion, "The Ukrainian immigrants of the first period were almost exclusively farmers from Galicia."

[88] Harold Lerner, "The Role of the Poles in the Development of Latin American Civilization" (Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1962), 115-116.

Nevertheless, whether through the efforts of agitators or through some other influence, Ukrainians from regions other than Galicia trickled to Argentina in moderate numbers. Neighbours in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Bukovynians and Galicians settled alongside each other once more abroad in Argentina when a group of Bukovynian immmigrants founded the colony of San Isidro, close to the border with Brazil, in the Misiones Department of Concepción.[89] Compatriots from the Russian Empire also drifted to Misiones. A group of Ukrainians from Volyn sometime in the 1900s illegally crossed the Russian-Austro-Hungarian border and made their way to Trieste, where they embarked on a ship that sailed to South America. These *mishky* (sack-toters), as they were called, because of their habit of travelling light with only a sack flung over their shoulders, wandered about Argentina following jobs, a trail which eventually led them to Misiones, where they learned they could buy land cheaply. Their journey's end finally came when they settled nearby compatriots already established there.[90]

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[89] Volodymyr Kovalyk, *Vasyliiany v Argentyni* (Buenos Aires: OO. Vasyliiany, 1988), 19.

Ukrainians of assorted regional backgrounds also settled in other parts of Argentina outside of Misiones, either for a temporary or indefinite period. Such was the case of Mike Vowk, who arrived in 1909, living first in Buenos Aires, and then "was advised to move to another town" where he "would find work and be among people from my home village." He spent three years in Argentina and then reemigrated to Canada, "with the intention of returning some day."[91] Other Ukrainians who left Argentina after a short stay were more equivocal about returning. Hryts Bodnaryk endured four very hungry months in Misiones before deciding that his chances for survival were better in the United States.[92] Michael Kulik was lured to Argentina on a false premise. A perfidious agent prevaricated that it was easier to enter the United States by using Argentina as a back entrance! It would take another two years before Kulik could raise the fare, by performing various seasonal jobs, and head straight for his original destination.[93] Another immigrant, a Bukovynian, was unable even after four years to gather enough money to reemigrate. Desperate, Hryhorii Savchuk pleaded with fellow countrymen in Canada to help him relocate to that country, promising to reimburse any costs incurred later.[94]

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[90] Iakiv Lavrychenko, "Pershyi misioner UAPTs v Argentini," *Ukrainskyi samostiinyk* no.2 (February 1974): 18.

[91] *Many Trails Crossed Here: A Story of Oyen Alberta and the Surrounding Districts* (Oyen: Oyen and District Historical Society, 1981), 194-195.

[92] *Svoboda*, 25 July 1903.

[93] *Svoboda*, 25 April 1907.

Fortunes, then, were clearly mixed. Those Ukrainians in Mendoza, who were referred to, according to a Polish visitor, as *Rusos polacos* or *Austriacos ucranianos*, are said by this same visitor to have endured severe hardships upon arrival,[95] and adjustment does not seem to have come any easier, according to another source, for those Ukrainians among the Galicians in the provinces of San Juan, Córdoba, Río Negro, Entre Ríos, and Santa Fé.[96] There is little information regarding the pre-World War I Ukrainian immigrants in Buenos Aires and its environs, but whatever little there is indicates that this larger group integrated better. Vasylyk presented an estimate of 4,000 for this group, based on the impressions of an eye-witness, but reveals little else about them except to add that the immigrants already had some work experience in urban centres in Austria, Prussia and France.[97]

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[94] *Russkii narod*, 28 December 1916.

[95] *Pamietniki emigrantow. Ameryka Poludniowa* (Warsaw: Instytut Gospodarstwa Spolecznego, 1939), 35.

[96] Lerner, "The Role of the Poles in Latin American Civilization," 116. Harold Lerner refers to them as "Poles," while Krzysztof Smolana, "Za ocean po lepsze zycie," in Marcin Kula, ed., *Dzieje Polonii w Ameryce Lacinskiej* (Wroclaw: Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1983), 55 is more specific, asserting that the immigrants in these provinces were from "Malopolska," that is, Galicia.

Scattered references in other sources, however, reflect the presence of the first Ukrainian political refugees among the immigrants in Argentina. These were eastern Ukrainians, from the Russian Empire, who fled to Argentina after the 1905 Revolution and settled in the city of Buenos Aires, its suburb Dock Sud, or in Berisso, a suburb of the Buenos Aires provincial capital of La Plata.[98] Argentine immigration records do not distinguish the immigrants arriving from Russia according to their nationality, but the Department of Immigration's annual report for 1909 does provide data relating to the religious background of the immigrants from Russia in that year, and asserts that of a total of 16,475 Russian immigrants arriving in Argentina in 1909, 8,639 were Jews, 5,091 were Orthodox, 2,683 Catholics and 62 were classified as Evangelicals.[99] Since Ukrainians in the Russian Empire were overwhelmingly of the Orthodox faith, they would have been included among the 5,000 or so Orthodox immigrants. Unfortunately, in his article on Russian emigration to Latin America at the turn of the twentieth century, N.V. Korolev does not provide any insights into the national provenances of the immigrants from Russia except to comment simply that "with regards to the national origins of the emigrants from Russia, they were Poles, Lithuanians, Germans, Jews, Ukrainians, Belarusians and Russians."[100] No estimates of their numbers are ventured. Another historian, Evgueni Dik, while able to distinguish ethnic Germans and Jews from ethnic Russians in the pre-World War I immigration from Russia, does not differentiate among the Eastern Slavs in Argentina.[101]

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[97] Vasylyk, *Ukrainski poselennia v Argentyni*, 18

[98] On the eastern Ukrainian immigrants, see the memoirs of Tetiana Mykhailivska-Tsymbal, *Spohady. Moie zhyttia na emigratsii* (Buenos Aires: Julian Serediak, 1984), 21-22; Ievhen Onatsky, "Pamiati pionera-patriota," *in Kalendar Svobody na zvychainyi rik 1957* (Jersey City: Ukrainian National Association, 1957), 145-149; M.R., "Ukraintsi v Argentyni i Urugvai," in *Iliustrovanyi Kalendar Svitlo na 1939 rik* (Buenos Aires: Svitlo, 1938), 40; V. Korolov, *Ukraintsi v Amerytsi* (Kyiv: Drukarnia 1-oi Kyivsk. drukars. spilky, 1909), 102-103, and Anatoli Chernenko and Alexei Shliajov, "Participantes de la Primera Revolución Rusa en Argentina," *America Latina* 37/38, nos. 1-2 (1981): 276-282.

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[99] *Memoria de la Dirección de Inmigración correspondente al año 1909* (Buenos Aires: Coni Hermanos, 1910); *Memoria de la Dirección de Inmigración correspondiente al año 1907* (Buenos Aires: Oficina Meteorológica Argentina, 1908) distinguishes among "Russians" (3,552), "Russian Jews" (1,393), and "Russian Germans" (1,100) arriving that year.

[100] N.V. Korolev, "Emigración de Rusia a la América Latina a fines del Siglo XIX, comienzos del Siglo XX," *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas* Vol. 13 (1976): 31.

[101] Evgueni Dik, "Emigración rusa a Argentina. (Fines del siglo XIX y comienzos del XX)," *America Latina* no.7 (July 1991): 70-78.

## Statistical profile of the first wave of settlers

In the absence of firm data it is difficult to present a reliable number for the pre-World War I Ukrainians, although attempts have been made. Mykhailo Vasylyk provides an estimate of 14,000, 10,000 in Misiones and 4,000 in Buenos Aires.[102] The estimate of Ukrainian arrivals to Misiones seems to be somewhat inflated: it appears to be based on the erroneous assumption that the rate of the influx of Ukrainians into the Territory continued to be as constant in the period 1903-1914 as it was in the years 1897-1902, whereas the evidence indicates the contrary. At complete odds with this estimate is Ryszard Stemplowski's figure of 2,500 Ukrainian-born immigrants in Misiones compared with 2,200 Poles in 1920.[103] This figure has not been accepted by Volodymyr Kovalyk, a Ukrainian Catholic priest resident in Misiones. Kovalyk continues to insist that the overwhelming majority of the Slavs in Misiones were Ukrainian, but presents no early hard evidence to support his argument except sources cited selectively from Stemplowski's original article.[104]

A few observations are nonetheless in order to explain the discrepancy. First, it should be stated that Stemplowski has made the most convincing case for a realistic number of the

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[102] Vasylyk, *Ukrainski poselennia v Argentyni,* 18.

[103] Stemplowski, "Los eslavos en Misiones," 389.

[104] Kovalyk, *Vasyliiany v Argentyni*, 23-24.

Ukrainian and Polish communities by drawing on and evaluating an array of Polish and Argentine sources, but rarely Ukrainian. By contrast, Vasylyk and Kovalyk, among others, have given weight exclusively to the very few Ukrainian sources they have consulted. Ukrainian estimates contemporary to the early period certainly suggest a Ukrainian plurality among immigrants in the Territory. Iaroslav Karpiak, the founder of the first *Prosvita* organization in Misiones, presented a figure of "up to 1,000 families" in 1910 in the *colonias* of Apostoles, San José, and Azara.[105] This is a figure which would appear to be reinforced by a census conducted by the Basilian fathers stationed in Prudentopolis (in the state of Paraná), Brazil, which enumerated 7,536 Ukrainians living in Misiones in 1913.[106] This figure undoubtedly applies to both foreign-born Ukrainians as well as those born in Misiones, and therefore the number of actual immigrants was considerably less than the census total. Conversely, the Basilian fathers' enumeration may have missed a number of scattered communities, such as those not adhering to the Catholic faith. One estimate, which embraces the Ukrainian communities in all the provinces of Argentina and includes Ukrainians from both the Austro-Hungarian and Russian

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[105] *Dilo*, 31 October 1910.

[106] Andrei Strelko, "Primeros inmigrantes ucranianos en Latinoamerica," *America Latina* no.1 (1975): 94-95.

Empires, sets forth 15,000 for this first wave of immigrants.[107] But 10,000, a number quoted in 1903 by a missionary priest in the Brazilian state of Paraná for all of Argentina[108] (but again including Argentine born), is probably a safer estimate (leaving room for the possibility that the early community estimates exaggerated the real figure) and 15,000 should be considered a maximum possible. A closer inspection of early parish records, both Greek Catholic and Russian Orthodox, the press of the Ukrainians from the Russian Empire in Buenos Aires, and determining how many settlers may have crossed illegally from Brazil, should yield a more exact number.

## Conditions in Argentina at the turn of the twentieth century

The 10,000-15,000 Ukrainians arrived in Argentina when the country was undergoing a major transformation. In 1880 the country had become a federation, following a long cycle of political instability and protracted Indian wars. The government of General Julio Argentino Roca (1880-1886) was composed of large-scale cattle barons and commercial and business interests, who opened up the country to foreign capital investment as a prerequisite for economic prosperity. Large landowners turned over their estates to tenant farming and sharecropping, bringing in immigrants to cultivate grains for export. Cattle ranchers, benefiting from the introduction of the refrigeration of meat and an expanding railway grid abetted by British capital, upgraded cattle products for trade in the international market.

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[107] M.R., "Ukraintsi v Argentyni i Uruhvai," in *Iliustrovanyi Kalendar 'Svitlo' na 1939 rik* (Buenos Aires: Svitlo, 1938), 40.

[108] *Svoboda,* 11 September 1903.

Immigrants, Ukrainians among them, flocked to Argentina under liberal entry laws and a liberal philosophy which stressed the importance of universal education, foreign investment, and foreign settlement for the country's progress. Because Argentina was a sparsely populated country, the immigrants were required above all for labour in construction, seasonal farming tasks, in the slaughter houses and *frigoríficos* (frozen meat-packing plants). And immigration affected Argentina's demographic structure more than any of the other major recipients of international migrants. Its population grew from less than 2 million in 1869 to nearly 8 million in 1914, when 30% of the nation's people were foreign-born.[109] That foreigners should have constituted such a large share of the Argentine population can be explained partly by the fact that the country had few inhabitants to begin with: only an estimated 1.1 million in 1857.[110] Furthermore, the population was not well distributed, with regions such as Misiones, Chaco and Formosa remaining sparsely populated until the onset of official colonization at the turn of the twentieth century. The development of a railway grid in Argentina from the 1860s, which reflected the export economy in the so-called littoral pampa regions, confirmed the primacy of the province of Buenos Aires. Its population grew from an estimated 90,000 in 1869 to 670,000 in 1895. The region's share of the national population also underwent a radical transformation, from 12.5% in 1869 to 25% by 1914.[111] Other regions in the littoral experienced similar demographic explosion with the expansion of the export economy and foreign immigration. The province of Santa Fé, for instance, grew nearly ten-fold from 41,000 dwellers in 1858 to 397,000 in 1895.[112]

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[109] Germani, "Mass Immigration and Modernization in Argentina," 333.

[110] David Rock, *Argentina 1516-1982: From Spanish Colonization to the Falklands War* (Berkeley-Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), 132.

Land remained concentrated in the hands of aristocrats, but gradually more tracts were made available to private contractors and buyers. In exceptional cases local government assumed the leading role in organizing the subdivision and parcelling of so-called fiscal lands. State-managed colonization was instrumental to the evolution of Misiones at the turn of the twentieth century. Argentina seized Misiones along with other territory from Paraguay after the latter's defeat in the War of the Triple Alliance (1865-1870). The population of this region on Argentina's takeover barely numbered 3,000. In 1882 Misiones was separated from the province of Corrientes and declared a national territory. But the province was largely ignored, earning a reputation as a haven for bandits and infested with tropical wildlife. Misiones is strategically wedged between two countries with whom Argentina had uneasy relationships: Paraguay and Brazil. Consequently, public officials expressed concern that if more attention was not paid to developing the region, then it would soon be lost to its larger and more populous neighbour, the United States of Brazil (Canada expressed similar sentiments concerning the United States of America when urging the settlement of the West), whose citizens were beginning to spill over to the region illegally. In 1893 a state authority was established in Posadas, the capital of Misiones, to organize the distribution of land to Argentine farmers or immigrants on generous terms.[113] Little progress had been made by 1898, when an influential Argentine newspaper lamented that only 9,000 arable hectares of a potential 3,000,000 were under cultivation and echoed the fears of the possible dispossession of the region if it was to continue to remain sparsely populated.[114] By that time, however, Governor Lanusse's first official experiment with European colonists had commenced.

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[111] Ibid., 143.

[112] Walter Nugent, *Crossings: The Great Transatlantic Migrations, 1870-1914* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 114.

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[113] Robert C. Eidt, *Pioneer Settlement in Northeast Argentina* (Madison, Milwaukee & London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1971), 9.

## Conclusion

The Apostoles group of August 1897 are not the first documented Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina, but the Misiones Ukrainians did constitute the core of Ukrainian settlement in the country till 1914. Thereafter the province of Buenos Aires surpassed Misiones in absolute numbers of Ukrainians, although nowhere else in the country did Ukrainians form such a large share of the provincial population as in Misiones, a situation which persists to this day.

That Misiones served as a primary focus of Ukrainian immigration reflects a self-perpetuating chain-migration in which kinship ties played a major role. From the perspective of the place of origin of the emigrants, the emigration process assumed a private character rather than one which was officially planned. Public institutions, such as the St. Raphael Galician and Bukovynian Emigrant Aid Society, were largely unaware of a significant movement of Ukrainians to Argentina at the turn of the twentieth century; nor is there any evidence of a role for the Austro-Hungarian and Russian governments in this emigration. Conversely, the settlement of Ukrainians in Misiones reflected a public policy in that territory. The Governor of Misiones, Juan José Lanusse, turned over land to prospective colonists to cultivate a crop indigenous to the region -- *yerba maté*. Ukrainians were invited to occupy this land and the initial settlers formed stable, compact clusters. Juan Batista Alberti's motto of "To Govern is to Populate," was thus put into effect in Misiones. The function of these compact settlements -- to cultivate arable land in a sparsely populated frontier region with a crop which would find an economy of scale -- provided an incentive, since the initial colonization schemes proved to be successful, for still further colonization, and the composition of later settlers was no longer restricted to villagers from a particular district, but reflected a wider range of regional backgrounds.

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[114] Solberg, Carl C., *Immigration and Nationalism: Argentina and Chile 1890-1914* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970), 21.

The importance of early Ukrainian settlement in Misiones to an analysis of interwar Ukrainian immigration into Argentina is obvious when it is considered that the presence of stable communities in that territory was a factor that influenced second-wave Ukrainian settlers to select that region, in the expectation that their compatriots already there could offer means of support. *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, as has been noted in Chapter One, recommended the region partly on those grounds. The existence of established communities also provided an auspicious environment for Ukrainian institutions such as the church to be effectively transplanted and ultimately flourish in Misiones: Misiones became the base for three of the most important denominations to which Ukrainians belonged in Argentina, as Chapter Four of this thesis will demonstrate.

While the Misiones experience embraced many of the early Ukrainian immigrants, others followed a history more typical of general Argentine immigration patterns. This group tended to be transient workers in pursuit of seasonal labour, whether in agriculture or in railway construction. One notable exception is the urban-oriented eastern Ukrainian immigrants who eventually settled in specific neighbourhoods in the environs of Buenos Aires. Another exception is the Galician Ukrainian settlements in the province of Mendoza, and the others that soon followed in other regions. These small, disparate communities failed to develop in consonance with each other. In the rural districts, beyond Misiones, the demands of pioneer life appear to have been a factor in precluding the conditions in which community institutions could thrive. These communities became self-absorbed with matters directly essential to their survival. The uncoordinated nature of Ukrainian settlement in Argentina is reflected in this isolation of one community from another and in the ignorance of many transient workers of the existence of the enclaves. The case of the Bukovynian Ukrainian, Hryhorii

Savchuk, illustrates well the degree of disconnectedness when he appealed not to local Ukrainian communities in Argentina for succour, but to Ukrainians in Canada.

Urbanized Ukrainian communities in the province of Buenos Aires represent a different case. The immigrants did not live at a considerable distance from each other, nor were they subjected to the pioneering conditions of their rural counterparts. In spite of their past urban experience, many of the eastern Ukrainians appear to have also followed seasonal labour cycles across the country (see Chapter Four). But after their contracts had terminated or permanent work had been secured, they appear then to have settled indefinitely in the suburbs of Buenos Aires or Berisso. Once this urban settlement had stabilized, here, too, auspicious conditions were present for community activities in the respective neighbourhoods, but no ties appear to have been developed with Ukrainians of other regional backgrounds beyond these neighbourhoods.

In turn, the dispersed and spontaneous nature of Ukrainian settlemment has made accurate enumeration of the first-generation immigrants difficult. The recording practices of Argentine immigration officials are only partly at fault; the data collected on the immigrants by Austrian and Russian state employees, for their part, do not appear to have thus far enlightened students with respect to a precise breakdown of the nationalities and corresponding proportions in the ethnically assorted Austro-Hungarian and Russian immigration into Argentina. Recourse to Ukrainian community estimates of the size of the first wave of immigrants to Argentina has not proved to be a satisfactory alternative. Community activists, whether in Ukraine or Argentina, were largely oblivious to the process of Ukrainian immigration into Argentina and the diverse settlement patterns of the immigrants. At best, it became known that communities existed in Misiones and, to a lesser extent, Buenos Aires, and estimates of their size were proffered. These calculations, however, have tended to apply to both the foreign-born and their descendents in Argentina, and therefore do little to elucidate an approximate number for the actual immigrants. While many of the early estimates of Ukrainians in Argentina are necessarily incomplete because they fail to take into account the settlers beyond Misiones, some later estimates, conceived in the 1930s, tend to be confusing, as the following chapter shows, because they encompass immigrants from both the first and second waves, along with their descendants.

This tendency to treat the two waves as a single experience should not entirely be considered a misplaced approach. In some respects the second wave of Ukrainian immigration did come to resemble its predecessor. This was particularly true in the roles they fulfilled in the Argentine economy. Once again, Ukrainians tended to be engaged as transient labourers, colonists and factory workers, and often faced the same conditions as their predecessors. Like the first wave of immigrants, notwithstanding the fact that they reinforced the existing populations in places such as Misiones and Buenos Aires, the second immigration was also characterized by its dispersed mode of settlement with similar initial consequences. But unlike the first period of Ukrainian emigration, the second assumed a less spontaneous, unmanaged character, with, as the first chapter of this thesis has discussed, official and unofficial agencies playing a more active role. In sheer numbers, too, as the following chapter demonstrates, the second immigration came to be distinguished from the first. The magnitude of Ukrainian immigration in the 1920-1939 constitutes a major theme in Chapter Three, partly because the records of this period yield richer data for a serious appraisal of the number participating. Argentine immigration policy in the prewar period is contrasted with postwar practices in order to distinguish continuity and persistence in state attitudes toward immigration, and, in turn, to explain how this affected the newcomers. Changes in Argentine politics and society in the course of the interwar period are examined from the perspective of the socio-economic integration of the immigrants, and here parallels are occasionally drawn with the prewar immigrant experience.

# CHAPTER THREE

## VISIONS OF A FUTURE: THE BACKGROUND TO UKRAINIAN IMMIGRATION INTO ARGENTINA, 1920-1939

Regardless of whether it was ultimately 10,000 or 15,000, the scale of the early Ukrainian immigration represented only a small fraction of the overall number of 2,520,000 immigrants who came in the period 1857-1920.[115] The majority of these two and a half million immigrants did not conform to the ideal model of settlers the Argentine elite had in mind when they pursued a vigorous programme of immigration to populate the country they governed and to cater to the export sector. This elite, in the main politicians and public relations officials, were receptive to the ideas emanating from Western Europe to promote modernization, particularly Social Darwinism, derived from the evolutionary theories of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer, and Auguste Comte's positivism. From such theories liberals in Argentina maintained that modernization could best be accomplished in their country by combining European immigration, foreign capital investment, and railway building. In this way, the legacy of backwardness in the interior would be overcome. Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, a representative of the liberal Generation of 1837, and future president of Argentina, described the dichotomy he and other like-minded Liberals perceived in the country in his novel, *Civilization*

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[115] Germani, "Mass Immigration and Modernization in Argentina," 317.

*and Barbarism*. Civilization, for Sarmiento, was exemplified by Buenos Aires, oriented to advanced Europe, while "barbarity" was the backward interior, where feudal structures persisted and where "progress" was resisted.[116]

## Argentine elite attitudes toward Slavic immigration

Considering that members of the elite contended that Argentina's future lay with the adoption of concepts of progress associated with the North American and northern European states, their notion of what constituted "desirable" immigration reflected this pattern of thinking, where immigrants from northern Europe were preferred over those from other parts of the continent. One diplomat, Lucio Mansilla, later to become President Roca's ambassador to Russia, typifies these elitist attitudes towards immigration in his assessment of the suitability of the Slavs. Writing to Roca in 1881 Mansilla conveys the impressions of his visit to the Russian Empire, concluding that "Slavic or Russian immigration should not be stimulated" to Argentina.[117] In his view, the Slavs were backward, prone to religious fanaticism and, worst of all, extremely dirty. His antipathy towards the Slavs appears to have been shared by other influential public officials. According to Carlos Gustavo Bulcourf, who has studied the immigration philosophy of the state at the end of the nineteenth century, the Argentine Generation of '80, a circle of classical liberal intellectuals and political leaders who influenced policy in Argentina at the end of the nineteenth century, while concurring that mass immigration from Europe was not only beneficial to Argentina, but, indeed, essential, nonetheless favoured a selective immigration. Sentiments expressed with regards to immigration from "Latin" countries were unfavourable, and on the subject of admitting Slavs, "absolutely negative."[118]

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[116] Bradford E. Burns, "Cultures in Conflict: The Implication of Modernization in Nineteenth Century Latin America," in Bradford E. Burns and Thomas Skidmore, eds., *Elites, Masses and Modernization in Latin America, 1850-1930* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), 11-77.

[117] Carlos Gustavo Bulcourf, "Noticias desde Europa sobre la inmigración," in *La inmigración a América Latina (primera jornadas internacionales sobre la migración en América*) (Mexico City: Instituto Panamericano de Geografia e Historia [serie inmigración, tomo 2]), 42.

Carl E. Solberg, who has compared Argentina's immigration policy at the turn of the twentieth century with Canada's, acknowledges that Argentina, like Canada, began with a bias in favour of northern Europeans as settlers, but was never able to attract as many (because northern Europeans apparently feared a drop in living standards, although prejudice may have been another factor), and so channelled its efforts towards Italy and Spain, successfully drawing millions of immigrants from these countries. Although ethnic prejudices persisted among the elite, argues Solberg, Argentina received immigrants from Southern Europe (with whom it shared lingustic, cultural and religious affinities) and Eastern Europe more warmly than Canada. And while concern was aired lest the nation's racial balance be upset, local nativist hysteria did not reach the shrill, xenophobic pitch evident in Canada when it began to admit large numbers of Eastern Europeans. Rather, an open-door policy was maintained, one which welcomed immigrants who were willing to labour as sharecroppers and renters on the estates of large landowners, and on whose admission few restrictions were imposed.[119]

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[118] Ibid.

As Argentina began to accept Slavs in larger numbers, official perceptions of this group mellowed. The Department of Immigration's annual report for 1899 provided a more positive evaluation of Slavs than the earlier example alluded to of 1881, when it was advocated that the government refrain from encouraging their settlement. Referring to the latest influx of Ukrainians and Poles from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the report, which does not distinguish between the two groups, commented:

> **Some 950 Austrians have arrived, mainly Poles....The volume of their arrivals has diminished, tending to stabilize at a prudent level. The Polish immigrants do not come with much, but thanks to the settlements formed already in Misiones and Entre Ríos, they now have a source of support which will allow for smoother adjustment. Consequently, it can now be said that the immigration of this group no longer poses a threat to the**

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[119] Carl E. Solberg, *The Prairies and the Pampas: Agrarian Policy in Canada and Argentina, 1880-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 78-79.

> **interests of the country. The Pole, once settled, is respectful, sober and hardworking. His culture is deficient, but this shortcoming is compensated by his other qualities. Generally, he comes with no money and with a desire to settle. Many have come from Brazil, summoned by their compatriots, who have been prospering in the *colonias* of Misiones or are scattered in Entre Ríos.**[120]

## The genesis of the *polaco* stereotype

While the report generally depicted a favourable portrayal of the Ukrainian and Polish agricultural immigrants, the image of the *polacos* as destitute and culturally backward served as the basis of a widespread stereotype of the two Slavic groups in Misiones, where the term *polaco* acquired similar pejorative connotations in the Southern Cone regions of Misiones and southern Brazil to the disparaging appellation of "bohunk" in North America.[121] The portrait of the *polaco* was modified somewhat and diffused to other parts of Argentina, especially the province of Buenos Aires, with the arrival of the second wave of immigrants.

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[120] *Memoria de la Dirección de Inmigración correspondiente al año 1899* (Buenos Aires: Ministerio de Agricultura), 11.

[121] Bartolomé, "The Colonos of Apostoles," 237-245.

## Statistical profile of European immigration into Argentina in 1921-1940

After World War I, Argentina continued to encourage immigration, never imposing national quotas, as did North America, for instance, using only questionable political orientation (aimed at anarchists and Communists) as a major criterion by which to deny admission. With immigration laws still relatively liberal, Argentina received a net gain of 969,986 immigrants in the period 1921-1930 compared with Canada's 142,000 in the same decade.[122] Only when the Great Depression struck were admission controls tightened, and during the years of recession departures from Argentina assumed greater importance than immigration.

New measures enacted in the 1930s, however, favoured farmers,[123] and this policy was conducive to groups such as the Ukrainian with a preponderance of agriculturalists. This explains the rise in the proportion of immigrants from Poland in the general flow of immigration, which sociologist Gino Germani observed, from (according to his sources) 13% of all immigrants in 1921-1930 to 58% in 1931-1940.[124] Other factors included Mussolini's nationalist policies in Italy, which kept many prospective emigrants at home, and the emergence of a pro-labour republican Spain in 1931, followed by three years of civil war in 1936-1939.

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[122] Solberg, *The Prairies and the Pampas,* 75. Overall, in the period 1870-1930 four times as many immigrants arrived and stayed in Argentina than in Canada.

[123] Magnus Morner, *Adventurers and Proletarians: The Story of Migrants in Latin America* (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, and Paris: Unesco, 1985), 88.

The steady increase of the East European element in the composition of European immigration into Argentina is obvious when we compare the rates of arrivals over departures of the various European groups. Tables 2 and 3[125] present the net positive immigration after arrivals and departures by nationality in alphabetical order. A discussion of misclassification and problems with the Argentine statistical compendiums, which are less detailed and precise than their North American equivalents, follows in the next section.

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[124] Gino Germani, "Mass Immigration in Latin America," in Irving L. Horowitz, ed., Masses in Latin America, 294. Germani here was referring to those immigrants arriving from overseas as second and third class passengers.

[125] Source for Tables 2 & 3: Canals Frau, "La inmigración europea en la Argentina," Anales del Instituto Etnico Nacional (Buenos Aires) no.1 (1948): 87-118

## TABLE 2

## European Immigration into Argentina, 1921-1930

(Overseas Arrivals and Departures of 1st, 2nd & 3rd Class Passengers)

| Group | Arrivals | Departures | Balance | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Albanians | 1,821 | 226 | 1,595 | 88% |
| Andorrans | 5 | 1 | 4 | 80% |
| Austrians | 12,116 | 3,574 | 8,542 | 71% |
| Belgians | 3,262 | 2,479 | 783 | 24% |
| Bulgarians | 8,238 | 1,416 | 6,822 | 83% |
| Czecho-Slovakians | 27,605 | 4,843 | 22,762 | 82% |
| Danes | 6,765 | 3,726 | 3,039 | 45% |
| Danzigers* | 863 | 179 | 684 | 79% |
| Dutch | 2,744 | 2,442 | 302 | 11% |
| English | 34,098 | 33,057 | 1,041 | 3% |
| Estonians | 639 | 117 | 522 | 82% |
| Finns | 787 | 218 | 569 | 72% |
| French | 24,488 | 22,633 | 1,855 | 8% |
| Germans | 67,871 | 40,698 | 27,173 | 40% |
| Greeks | 7,415 | 1,845 | 5,570 | 75% |
| Hungarians | 4,375 | 1,163 | 3,212 | 73% |
| Icelanders** | 14 | 11 | 3 | 21% |
| Irish** | 938 | 259 | 679 | 72% |
| Italians | 548,006 | 204,544 | 343,462 | 63% |
| Latvians | 857 | 222 | 635 | 74% |
| Liechten-steiners* | 4 | 4 | 0 | - |
| Lithuanians | 16,120 | 1,081 | 15,039 | 93% |
| Luxembourgers | 153 | 123 | 30 | 20% |
| Maltese** | 51 | 34 | 17 | 33% |
| Monagasques*** | 17 | 7 | 10 | 59% |
| Norwegians | 1,838 | 886 | 952 | 52% |
| Poles | 128,827 | 13,648 | 115,179 | 89% |
| Portuguese | 26,366 | 9,874 | 16,492 | 63% |
| Romanians | 15,213 | 3,625 | 11,588 | 76% |
| Russians | 12,060 | 4,792 | 7,268 | 60% |
| Sanmarinese | 215 | 0 | 215 | 100% |
| Spaniards | 412,233 | 184,981 | 227,252 | 55% |
| Swedes | 2,119 | 1,215 | 904 | 43% |
| Swiss | 7,761 | 4,888 | 2,873 | 37% |
| Ukrainians | 4,241 | 166 | 4,075 | 96% |
| Total | 1,380,125 | 548,977 | 831,148 | 60% |

## TABLE 3

## European Immigration into Argentina, 1931-1940

(Overseas Arrivals and Departures of 1st, 2nd & 3rd Class Passengers)

| Group | Arrivals | Departures | Balance | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Albanians | 190 | 512 | -332 | - |
| Andorrans | 2 | 2 | 0 | - |
| Austrians | 3,835 | 2,148 | 1,687 | 44% |
| Belgians | 2,012 | 1,520 | 492 | 24% |
| Bulgarians | 1,685 | 2,016 | -331 | - |
| Czecho-Slovakians | 6,378 | 3,869 | 2,509 | 39% |
| Danes | 1,420 | 1,860 | -440 | - |
| Danzigers | 124 | 96 | 28 | 23% |
| Dutch | 2,066 | 1,660 | 406 | 20% |
| English | 22,941 | 26,041 | -3,100 | - |
| Estonians | 183 | 144 | 39 | 21% |
| Finns | 234 | 148 | 86 | 37% |
| French | 11,925 | 11,476 | 449 | 4% |
| Germans | 32,847 | 22,615 | 10,232 | 31% |
| Greeks | 2,644 | 2,358 | 286 | 11% |
| Hungarians | 2,249 | 1,453 | 796 | 35% |
| Icelanders | 11 | 16 | -5 | - |
| Irish | 1,006 | 157 | 849 | 84% |
| Italians | 97,504 | 73,538 | 23,966 | 25% |
| Latvians | 258 | 146 | 112 | 43% |
| Liechtensteiners | 5 | 5 | 0 | - |
| Lithuanians | 2,044 | 1,547 | 497 | 24% |
| Luxembourgers | 95 | 42 | 53 | 56% |
| Maltese | 13 | 6 | 7 | 54% |
| Monagasques | 12 | 4 | 8 | 67% |
| Norwegians | 627 | 634 | -7 | - |
| Poles | 52,575 | 10,719 | 41,856 | 80% |
| Portuguese | 8,271 | 6,800 | 1,471 | 18% |
| Romanians | 7,400 | 1,998 | 5,402 | 73% |
| Russians | 266 | 804 | -538 | - |
| Sanmarinese | 7 | 4 | 3 | 43% |
| Spaniards | 82,771 | 83,758 | -987 | - |
| Swedes | 958 | 962 | -4 | - |
| Swiss | 5,331 | 3,207 | 2,124 | 40% |
| Ukrainians | 43 | 34 | 9 | 21% |
| Total | 349,932 | 262,299 | 87,633 | 25% |

* Begin to appear in Argentine immigration statistical records in 1923

** Begin to appear in Argentine immigration statistical records in 1925

*** Begin to appear in Argentine immigration statistical records in 1924

## "The False Nationality of the Foreigner"

In a study titled "The False Nationality of the Foreigner," Narciso Binayan Carmona laments the practice of the frequent mislabelling of a variety of nationalities immigrating into Argentina in the last century or so by state officials. He traces this imprecise procedure to article 2 of Decree 145 of the Argentine Constitution of 19 September 1857 which stressed the principle of *jus soli* (birthplace) to determine the national identity of newcomers to the country. Such defective laws as this, argues Carmona, which tended to result in the citizenship rather than the ethnicity of the immigrant being declared, obscured the true ethnic composition of the immigration. To make matters worse, according to Carmona, many immigrants who had struggled in their homelands to maintain their distinctive identity, were recorded on arrival in Argentina as members of the oppressor state's nationality. Thus the Irish who fled the devastating famine of 1845-1851, which raged when their entire country was under British rule, were registered as "English" by Argentine immigration officials, and Jews taking flight from Tsarist pogroms were listed as "Russians." Many more examples abound in this "tango of nationalities," as Carmona calls it, with Armenians, along with several others, recorded as "Turks," Basques as

Spaniards, etc.[126]

Indeed, it was often the case that the nationality groups listed in immigration records were rarely the ones to emigrate to Argentina. Few actual Romanians accompanied the emigration from Romania to Argentina, for instance, and Russians and Poles constituted a fraction of those appearing in the rolls as *rusos* and *polacos*. Rather, the national minorities were the more inclined to leave and settle overseas than the dominant group. This is confirmed in Romanian statistical data: in 1938, for example, of 343 emigrants leaving Romania for Argentina, only 14 were actually Romanian, the remainder being members of the state's national minorities -- Jews, Germans, and Hungarians, predominantly.[127]

Ukrainians, too, were generally bearers of passports that declared their citizenship rather than nationality, and were usually registered as Poles, Romanians, Russians, and Czechoslovakians in Argentina, depending on the region the immigrants came from. A number, as is evident in Tables 2 and 3, and acknowledged in Carmona's study, were also recorded correctly as "Ukrainians," especially during much of the

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[126] Narciso Binayan Carmona, "La falsa nacionalidad del extranjero," in *Primeras jornadas nacional de estudios sobre inmigración en Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Ministerio de Educación y Justicia - Secretaría de Cultura, 1985), 111-119.

[127] *Anuarul Statistic al Romaniei* for 1938.

1920s. It is difficult to explain this inconsistency, which only adds to the general confusion when attempting to calculate an overall number for Ukrainian immigrants in the interwar period.

## Estimating the number of Ukrainian interwar immigrants: methodology

But how is it that some Ukrainians appeared in the immigration records as a separate entity at all? Canals Frau, in his survey of European immigrants, alludes to the Ukrainian immigrants but does not explain why 4,000 or so were recorded separately from those otherwise appearing under different rubrics. The best he can offer is to comment that prior to 1921 Ukrainians were recorded as Russians, while in the interwar period ethnic Ukrainians composed 80% of Ukraine's (presumably the Ukrainian SSR's) population,[128] thus leaving the puzzle unsolved.

The purpose of the discussion that follows is to elucidate the problem of estimating the number of Ukrainians arriving in Argentina in the interwar period. Their departure and arrivals were recorded in circumstances where neither the sending countries, nor the receiving countries employed the same or consistent definitions. Argentina, for instance, employed the criterion of registering immigrants on the basis of their citizenship, and in the Ukrainian case, there was the exception of one group who presented passports issued by diplomatic missions in which their nationality was stated. Romania, on the other hand, did maintain statistics, at least for some years, on the nationality of its emigrants, who were nonetheless recorded as citizens of Romania when they were admitted to Argentina. Poland, from 1927 to 1938, distinguished its emigrants on the basis of their religious, not national affiliation. Poland also kept records on the regional provenance of the emigrants, a practice followed by Czechoslovakia.

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[128] Canals Frau, "La inmigración europea en la Argentina," *Anales del Instituto Étnico Nacional* no.1 (1948): 112.

While it is clear that the government data in each case are defective and incomplete, they do contain sufficient details with which to construct a hypothetical minimum number of Ukrainian immigrants. But for the exercise of presenting a more realistic estimate of their actual numbers the criteria the sources used are compared and scrutinized, then balanced with other official and non-official data. The different sets of sources and problems are examined and interpreted separately to clarify the foundations on which an overall estimate can be conceived.

## Argentine recognition of the Ukrainian People's Republic

The fact that a number of Ukrainians appeared separately in the immigration records is linked in part to Argentina's recognition of Ukraine as a sovereign, independent state, it being the only country in the Americas to have extended this endorsement. In the spring of 1920 the Ukrainian People's Republic's diplomatic mission in Warsaw contacted the Argentine Legation in Berlin to request recognition of Ukraine as an independent state, pointing out that Poland had already done this. Several months later, in January 1921 representatives of the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) once again approached Argentina seeking recognition, noting that on the one hand this had been extended to a number of nations in the old Russian Empire, while formal recognition of the UNR had already been obtained from the Vatican, Poland, Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, and Georgia. On 5 February 1921 President Hipólito Yrigoyen finally penned his signature to a document which "recognises the Ukrainian Republic as a free and independent State."[129]

Earlier the Argentine Ministry of External Affairs had received a communication from the Argentine Consulate-General in Geneva dated 25 August 1920, on the matter of what procedures should be followed when "citizens of the Ukrainian Republic" wishing to emigrate to Argentina present documents stamped by representatives of the government of that republic (in Berne, for instance), which has still not been recognized by Argentina. A reply by the Argentine Ministry of External Affairs of 4 November 1920 recommended that if the Ukrainian documents were deemed valid and in order, then the Consulate-General could proceed with the next stage of processing the application.[130]

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[129] Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto, *Memoria presentada al Honorable Congreso Nacional 1920-1921* (Buenos Aires: no publisher, 1923), 42-43. The same transcripts can be found in the archives of the Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto, Caja 21, Expediente 8, 1943 titled "Gestiones para el reconocimiento de Ucrania (antecedentes)." A claim by one I.P. Omelchenko that Yrigoyen received assistance from 40 Ukrainian exiles (fugitives of Tsar Nicholas II's regime), which enabled him to be elected in 1916, thereby implying that this support made the President sympathetic to the Ukrainian cause, has not been confirmed. "UDAS-Selianska Partiia v Argentyni," *Ukrainska zemlia* (Munich) no.11 (1984): 47-48.

## Ukrainians in Argentine immigration records

In 1921 Ukrainians begin to appear for the first time in Argentine immigration rolls. In one of its reports covering the period 1857-1924, the Department of Immigration inserted a note under its listing for "Russians" that, "Since 1919 [Imperial] Russia has been splintered into Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, and Finland, independently of that part of Poland previously annexed. From 1922, the statistics include the new states, separating the immigrants on the basis of their new nationality [sic], classifying them according to their place of birth."[131] Thus, those nations recognized by the Argentine government, hitherto in the Russian Empire, had some of their nationals clearly identified separately in the immigration records. There appears to have been no formal recognition of a Belarusian independent republic, and this would explain why Belarusians, as opposed to Ukrainians, are not listed in any official immigration publications.

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[130] Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto, *Memoria presentada al Honorable Congreso Nacional* 1920-1921 (Buenos Aires: no publisher, 1923), 415-416.

[131] Dirección General de Inmigración, *Resumen estadístico de movimiento migratorio en la República Argentina. Año 1857-1924* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Graficos del Ministerio de

The subject of the passports issued by the Ukrainian People's Republic is treated in Sir John Hope Simpson's study of post-World War I refugees. Simpson explains that:

> **At the time when the Ukrainian emigration took place the passport issued by the democratic Ukrainian Republic was accepted by almost all the Powers until the recognition of the U.S.S.R. by the Powers at successive dates; a correspondent states that even after this recognition, which took place in France in 1924, Ukrainian passports were in fact accepted as valid until 1926. In many countries where there were large groups of refugees the administration provided passports on which the nationality of the holder was indicated as "Ukrainian." After the Arrangement of 1928 for the generalization of the Nansen certificate, holders of this certificate originating from the former territory of the Russian Empire were classified as of Russian origin.**[132]

From the above statement it is reasonable to infer that the Ukrainians who were identified as such by immigration officials were those who obtained their passports from the Ukrainian People's Republic's government-in-exile: the same is

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Agricultura de la Nacion, 1925).

[132] Sir John Hope Simpson, *The Refugee Problem: Report of a Survey*, 115.

probably true of other countries of Ukrainian settlement where some Ukrainians were listed separately. The "Arrangement of 1928" to which Simpson refers may also explain the considerable decline in the number of Ukrainians recorded as such after that year. Further credence to this presupposition, that the Ukrainians who were correctly identified in the Argentine immigration records were likely holders of Nansen passports issued by the UNR's government in exile, can be obtained from the parallel situation of the Armenians in Argentina. Carmona notes that while most Armenian immigrants were erroneously classified as members of other nationalities, there nonetheless existed the anomaly of "a certain number" registered as "Armenians."[133] The discrepancy, in his judgement, is attributable to the latter group being "bearers of Nansen passports."[134] Likewise, one can explain the incongruity of the Ukrainian case in similar terms.

From Frau's synthesis on European immigration we know how many Ukrainians arrived in and departed from Argentina by sea. A more accurate reconstruction, which includes those Ukrainians entering and leaving by other routes besides sea, has been possible by consulting annual immigration reports for certain years. These composite figures, encompassing the years 1921-1927, 1932-1934, and 1937-1938 (it hasn't been possible to obtain complete data for the other years), are shown below in Table 4.

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[133] Carmona, "La falsa nacionalidad del extranjero," 117.

[134] Ibid.

TABLE 4

Total Number of Immigrants Classified as Ukrainians, 1921-1938
Breakdown by Years (all categories)

| Year | Arrivals | Departures | Balance |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1921 | 149 | 5 | 144 |
| 1922 | 1,182 | 17 | 1,165 |
| 1923 | 1,410 | 100 | 1,310 |
| 1924 | 262 | 18 | 244 |
| 1925 | 267 | 24 | 243 |
| 1926 | 294 | 34 | 260 |
| 1927 | 194 | 39 | 155 |
| 1932 | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| 1933 | 154 | 140 | 14 |
| 1934 | 148 | 149 | -1 |
| 1937 | 208 | 170 | 38 |
| 1938 | 218 | 205 | 13 |
| Total | 4,491 | 904 | 3,587 |

Source: Dirección General de Inmigración. *Resumen estadistico del movimineto migratorio en la República Argentina. Años 1857-1924* (Buenos Aires: Ministerio de Agricultura de la Nación, 1925); Direccion General de Inmigracion. *Memoria. Qiunquenio 1923/1927. Comentarios* (no publisher or date stated), *Memoria año 1932*, *Memoria año 1933*, *Memoria 1934*, *Memoria de inmigración año 1937* (Buenos Aires: Ministerio de Agricultura, 1940), *Memoria año 1938*. The figures for 1921-1922 include passengers of all classes arriving and departing by sea and river. All other years include immigrants arriving by sea, river, land, and air (from 1933), except 1932, which refers to immigrants arriving by sea (all three classes) only.

A closer approximation of the real overall figure for this group can be accomplished, however, even without the use of the missing annual immigration compilations by adopting the method of adding up the number of Ukrainians arriving and departing by sea in those years for which this information is available, retrievable from the immigration records cited above, and then subtracting this number from Frau's sum total of Ukrainian immigrants (see Tables 2 and 3) arriving and departing by sea (1st, 2nd, and 3rd class passengers) for the period 1921-1940. From such sources it can be determined that 3,639 immigrants classified as Ukrainians arrived by sea as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd class passengers in the years 1921-1927, 1932-1934, and 1937-1938, while 162 departed the same way, *via ultramar*. By substracting these numbers from Frau's totals of 4,284 arrivals and 200 departures, it can be concluded that an additional 645 immigrants arrived and 38 departed by sea in the intervening years. By appending these latter two figures to the revised totals shown in Table 4 of 4,491 arrivals and 904 departures, the numbers for arrivals and departures in the period 1921-1940 are now amended to 5,136 arrivals and 942 departures, respectively, leaving a net gain of 4,194. In short, it can be said that it is known with certainty that no fewer than these numbers of immigrants classified as Ukrainians arrived, departed, and remained, and that the overall real net positive immigration, in view of the scale of departures in the 1930s as shown in Table 4, was probably not that much higher than the last quoted.

The question now arises of whether all the immigrants classified as Ukrainians were ethnically so. Frau had noted that 20% of the population of Ukraine were non-Ukrainians, thereby leaving room for the possibility that members of the national minorities were included in the immigration. There may have been such sporadic cases, but at present there is no hard evidence to verify their inclusion in that group. The nearest acknowledgement that such cases may have existed is a reference to a certain Liove Wainschenke applying to be admitted to Argentina in 1929, presenting a document indicating his birthplace as Ukraine. His passport was Soviet (the standard passport a citizen of Soviet Ukraine would obtain in order to travel or emigrate abroad would declare its possessor simulateously a citizen of the "Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic and of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics"[135]), and the Consul-General in Rotterdam handling his case, Arturo Monteverde, recommended on that basis that entry to Argentina be denied.[136] In general, the Argentine government, which withheld recognition of the Soviet Union till 1946, was reluctant to admit immigrants from any of the regions lying within the Soviet Union. The reasons were concern for national security, to prevent the infiltration of political agitators, on the one hand, and lingering prejudices, on the other. When López Prieto, the Argentine Consul-General in Constantinople, received instructions from the Department of Immigration in 1925 that he could approve the documents of emigrants from Ukraine, "so long as they were healthy and personally considered convenient," his reply was:

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[135] *La Société de Nations et les réfugiés ukrainiens* (Paris: Edition du Haut Conseil des Emigrés Ukrainiens, n.d., c. 1929), 39.

[136] Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto, Division Politica, Caja 7, expediente III, año 1927, 173-174.

> How can I know who these individuals having come out of Ukraine are? In my mind, *a priori*, they are all rejected on two counts: 1. They are Jews, that is to say, unproductive. II. They come from Soviet Russia, where the Jewish element is entirely Bolshevik.[137]

Elaborating in his report to the Argentine Ministry of External Affairs in 1929 on his general policy toward emigration to Argentina from the Soviet territories, López Prieto commented:

> Some years ago and on the basis of an enquiry I made to the Ministry from Lisbon, I received a final order not to endorse the passports of those Russians originating in Russia, whether they be Reds or Whites. I considered that order perfectly logical, and until then I have abided by it. And I believe that these instructions by their extension still to be expedient. Because, if the Red Russians are a menace due to their anarchic mental disposition and their absurd and violent methods, the White Russians are equally a threat in virtue of their advanced state of degeneration -- and I am not referring, naturally, to certain agricultural districts such as Ukraine. Generally speaking, the races of Russia, subjected to servitude over a multitude of years, cannot be regenerated, in my view.[138]

It is not clear how many exceptions were made to the rule, nor whether, ultimately, citizens of Soviet Ukraine entering Argentina with Soviet passports were classified as Ukrainians or Russians. Harder data would be required to verify the actual composition of the group identified as "Ukrainians" in the Argentine immigration records, to determine whether members of the national minorities were included. But it would be logical to conclude that the immigrants bringing forth passports and documents with "Ukrainian" stamped as their nationality, and recorded as such by Argentine immigration officials, were in fact nationally conscious Ukrainians. This deduction is based on the premise that the point of possessing and issuing documents of this character was to demonstrate a political statement attesting to the distinct identity of the group.

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[137] Ibid., 143.

[138] Ibid., 138.

As far as the regional distribution of these Ukrainians is concerned this information can be recovered from the data pertaining to boarders at the government's *Hotel de Inmigrantes* in Buenos Aires, where immigrants were sheltered for up to fifteen days and nourished at government expense,[139] in the period 1923-1927. Table 5 presents the annual intake of Ukrainian boarders and their percentage of all Ukrainian arrivals that year, and Table 6 that follows indicates their distribution across Argentina in 1923-1927, since in this case the data do not disaggregate by year.

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[139] The amount of time allowed at the *Hotel de Inmigrantes* appears to have varied over the years. While Mykhailo Danylyshyn (*Ukraintsi v Argentyni*, 62), who arrived in 1927, cites 15 days as the term permitted, a year later *Ukrainske slovo*, 29 April 1928 reported 5 days as the maximum. Panas Hubarchuk, who arrived in Buenos Aires in 1928, claimed 3 days as the limit ("Ukraintsi v Arhentini," *Zhovten* 12 (1956): 68).

TABLE 5

Number of Ukrainian Boarders at the Hotel de Inmigrantes, 1923-1927

| Year | Number | As % of all Ukrainian Immigrants |
|---|---|---|
| 1923 | 959 | 68% |
| 1924 | 172 | 66% |
| 1925 | 153 | 57% |
| 1926 | 55 | 19% |
| 1927 | 79 | 41% |
| Total | 1,418 | 50.2% (average) |

TABLE 6
Distribution of Ukrainian Boarders by Region, 1923-1927

| Region | Number |
|---|---|
| Santa Fé | 494 |
| Buenos Aires [F.C. and Province) | 404 |
| Córdoba | 171 |
| Mendoza | 152 |
| Tucumán | 57 |
| Chaco | 41 |
| Entre Rios | 40 |
| San Juan | 23 |
| Neuquén | 9 |
| La Pampa | 8 |
| Corrientes | 4 |
| Misiones | 3 |
| Chubut | 2 |
| Santa Cruz | 1 |
| Rio Negro, Formosa, Los Andes, Tierra del Fuego | - |

Source: Dirección General de Inmigración. *Quinquenio 1923/1927. Comentarios.*

A salient trend discernible in Table 5 is the steady decline over time in the percentage of users of the *Hotel* facilties. This can be attributable to more newcomers turning to relatives and friends for support on arrival. The vast majority of the immigrants who arrived in 1923-1924 had no relatives or friends already in Argentina; nor did they have a guaranteed job, which explains their recourse to the *Hotel*. Table 6 details the *intended* destination of the immigrants and thus is not a reliable guide to where they actually settled. The preference for the province of Santa Fé, for instance, probably reflected harvest work in the province and railway construction. But fewer Ukrainians settled permanently in the province once contracts expired compared to those in the province of Buenos Aires.

While it is almost certain that the immigrants classified as Ukrainians were ethnically so, the task now is to determine how many of the immigrants entering Argentina with Polish, Romanian and Czechoslovakian passports were Ukrainians.

### Romanian statistics on Ukrainian emigration to Argentina

In the case of Romania this has been possible to accomplish for the years 1926, 1929-1932, 1934-1939 by examining Romanian statistics on emigration which provide a breakdown according to nationality. In these statistics Ukrainians appear separately and there is also reason to believe that they are included among the Russians listed.[140] Table 7 shows the number of Ukrainians and Russians emigrating to Argentina from Romania in those years for which it has been possible to acquire this data.

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[140] This is discussed in Cipko, "In Search of a New Home," 7.

TABLE 7

Ukrainian and Russian Emigration from Romania

| Year | Ukrainians | Russians |
|---|---|---|
| 1926 | 63 | 26 |
| 1929 | 171 | 86 |
| 1930 | 63 | 50 |
| 1931 | 9 | 11 |
| 1932 | - | 3 |
| 1934 | 1 | - |
| 1935 | - | 1 |
| 1936 | 3 | 3 |
| 1937 | 6 | 3 |
| 1938 | - | 7 |
| Total | 316 | 190 |

Source: *Anuarul Statistic al Romaniei* (Bucharest) for 1926 and 1929-1940

### Czechoslovakian statistics on Ukrainian emigration to Argentina

The data on Ukrainian emigration from Czechoslovakia are less specific. The statistics acquired refer only to an overall number of emigrants leaving the mainly Ukrainian region of Transcarpathia (Subcarpathian Rus') in the period 1922-1928. In those years a total of 1,197 individuals from this region emigrated to Argentina.[141]

### Polish statistics on Ukrainian emigration to Argentina, 1927-1938: religious criteria

Polish statistics on emigration, as indicated in chapter 1, differentiate emigrants only on the basis of religious affiliation, and then only for the period 1927-1938. In those years some 20,000 emigrants of the Greek Catholic faith and 25,100 of the Orthodox, denominations to which the majority of Ukrainians in Poland belonged, emigrated to Argentina.[142] Table 8 shows the number of emigrants to Argentina from Poland by religious affiliation.

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[141] *Statisticky prehled Republiky Ceskoslovenske sestavil statni urad statisticky* (Prague: Nakladam vlastnim v komisi knihkupectvi Bursik & Kohout, 1930), 48.

TABLE 8

Emigration from Poland to Argentina by Religious Affiliation, 1927-1938

| Denomination | Number |
|---|---|
| Roman Catholic | 29,900 |
| Greek Catholic | 20,000 |
| Orthodox | 25,100 |
| Evangelical | 4,000 |
| Jewish | 33,700 |
| Others | 300 |
| Undeclared | 100 |
| Total | 113,100 |

Source: *Maly Rocznik Statystyczny 1939* (Warsaw, 1939)

Although religious affiliation is not a synonym for nationality, fortunately one can say that Greek Catholics in Poland were almost exclusively Ukrainian. The Orthodox, however, comprised Belarusians as well as Ukrainians. Both the Roman Catholic and Orthodox faiths claimed the Belarusians in almost equal numbers. Consequently, the emigrating Orthodox indicated in the statistics referred to Ukrainians and Belarusians, while Roman Catholics comprised, in addition to Poles, Belarusians, Lithuanians, and even a minority of Ukrainians. Germans are likely to have formed the majority (although not absolute) of the Protestants emigrating. Thus, the religious denominations of the emigrants are not a precise indicator of the nationalities, except in the case of the Greek Catholics and Jews, and to a lesser extent, the Protestants. They can be compared with some profit, however, with corresponding statistics on the regional provenance of the emigrants.

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[142] *Maly Rocznik Statystyczny 1939* (Warsaw: Nakladem Glownego Urzedu Statystycznego, 1939), 53.

## Polish statistics on Ukrainian emigration to Argentina, 1927-1938: regional criteria

In light of the above, it would be instructive to clarify the ethnic composition and religious allegiances among the populace of those regions in Poland inhabited by Ukrainians. The eastern half of the former Austrian crown province of Galicia, populated mainly by Ukrainians, was divided under its new Polish masters after the Great War primarily into the three palatinates of Lviv, Stanyslaviv, and Ternopil, and referred to officially as Eastern Little-Poland. Some eight counties (povity) were added to the Lviv palatinate, apparently "in order to decrease the percentage of Ukrainians there."[143] Part of the Ukrainian Lemkian district of Galicia was appended to the Cracow palatinate. Ukrainians in Galicia were mostly Greek Catholic, but some Lemkian Ukrainians were also Greek Orthodox.

There was also a transitional group inhabiting Ukrainian territories known as the *Latynnyky*, Ukrainian-speaking Roman Catholics. Their origins are unclear, but one geographer and ethnographer hypothesizes that they were descendents of Polish farmers who long ago moved into the territories and were probably local Ukrainians, too, who had once been Greek Catholic or Orthodox, but in the epoch of serfdom had been pressured by their Polish landlords to convert to Roman Catholicism.[144] Their obscure origins notwithstanding, the *Latynnyky* tended to identify more with the dominant Polish group than with the Ukrainians. Their number in 1939 is estimated at 514,000 in the palatinates of Lviv, Stanyslaviv, and Ternopil, and in the adjoining Lemkian district in the Cracow palatinate.[145]

Ukrainian Orthodox were concentrated in the palatinates of Volyn (created with Lutsk as its capital) and Polissia (with its capital in Brest), regions transferred from the former Russian Empire to Poland following the Treaty of Riga on 18 March 1921. Polissia was a Ukrainian-Belarusian frontier region and there were few Poles there. The Belarusians, who were mainly dwellers of the palatinates of Navahrudak and part of Bialystok, inhabited the northern share of Polissia. The Russian census of 1897 had classified 73% of the inhabitants in the remaining part as Ukrainian, but the new Polish regime refused to acknowledge this, choosing instead to refer to the people indigenous to the area as "locals."[146]

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[143] Volodymyr Kubijovyc, *Western Ukraine within Poland 1920-1939* (Chicago: Ukrainian Research and Information Institute, 1963), 9.

[144] Ibid., 11.

[145] Ibid., 17.

Other Ukrainian territories ceded to Poland in 1921 included Chelm and Podlachia, which were incorporated for the most part into the Lublin palatinate and a portion into Bialystok. The Ukrainians of these regions were mainly Orthodox, though there was also a significant number of *Latynnyky*. Polish colonists began to move into the area in the post-war period, but the number of Poles appearing in the censuses for the two regions was considerably inflated to downplay their largely Ukrainian character. Having reworked Polish census material accused of deliberate distortion for political ends, a leading Ukrainian geographer has rendered the Ukrainian share of the population in the palatinates they inhabited in 1931 as follows: Galicia ("Eastern Little-Poland") 64.2% and 8.8% *Latynnyky;* Volyn 69.2%; Polissia 62.5%; Chelm and Podlachia 34.6% and 23.9%

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[146] Ibid., 21.

*Latynnyky*. Together, these proportions represent a grand total of 6 million Ukrainians and 700,000 *Latynnyky* in Western Ukraine.[147]

By correlating the Polish government data on emigration by region to Argentina with that by religion, a clearer conception of who the Orthodox emigrants were can be formed. Table 9 indicates the number of emigrants per region to Argentina in 1927-1938.

TABLE 9

Emigration from Poland to Argentina by Region, 1927-1938

| Region | Number |
|---|---|
| Warsaw (City) | 4,800 |
| Warsaw | 4,600 |
| Lodz | 2,800 |
| Kielce | 5,100 |
| Lublin | 7,700 |
| Bialystok | 5,500 |
| Vilnius | 7,000 |
| Navahrudak | 3,700 |
| Polissia | 10,100 |
| Volyn | 22,900 |
| Poznan | 800 |
| Pomerania | 600 |
| Silesia | 200 |
| Cracow | 2,000 |
| Lviv | 12,900 |
| Stanyslaviv | 6,600 |
| Ternopil | 15,700 |
| Unknown | 100 |
| Total | 113,100 |

Source: *Maly Rocznik Statystyczny 1939* (Warsaw, 1939)

Table 9 confirms that the majority of emigrants to Argentina from Poland -- 60% -- came from the districts of Polissia, Volyn, Lviv, Stanyslaviv, and Ternopil, although, as has been determined from table 8 on religious affiliations, not all were Ukrainians by nationality. It is not possible to ascertain how many of the emigrants from Volyn and Polissia were Ukrainians, but by probing government statistical records deeper it has been possible to determine for some years from what regions Poland's Orthodox emigrated. Table 10 presents the breakdown of Roman Catholics and Orthodox emigrants in the territories from which Belarusians emigrated overseas (unfortunately, no specific destinations are stated in the records), including Polissia, and the corresponding number of Orthodox from the Ukrainian territories in the years 1929 (April-June), 1933, and 1934.

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[147] Ibid., 26.

TABLE 10

Overseas Migration of Orthodox and Roman Catholics from Western Belarus and Orthodox from Western Ukraine

| Region | | 1929 | 1933 | 1934 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bialystok | R. Catholic | 348 | 112 | 141 | 601 |
| | Orthodox | 112 | 11 | 17 | 140 |
| Navahrudak | R. Catholic | 109 | 26 | 12 | 147 |
| | Orthodox | 78 | 13 | 23 | 114 |
| Polissia | R. Catholic | 67 | 40 | 14 | 121 |
| | Orthodox | 1,059 | 61 | 125 | 1,245 |
| Volyn | Orthodox | 2,638 | 69 | 189 | 2,896 |
| Lviv | Orthodox | 28 | - | 1 | 29 |
| Ternopil | Orthodox | 36 | 7 | 4 | 47 |
| Stanyslaviv | Orthodox | 7 | 4 | 3 | 14 |
| Lublin | Orthodox | 54 | 13 | 26 | 93 |

Source: *Statystyka pracy. Kwartalnik* (Warsaw) 1929, 1934, 1935

A total of 4,578 Orthodox emigrated overseas from Poland in the second quarter of 1929 (April-June) and in 1933 and 1934 of whom 3,079, or 67%, were from Volyn, the other Ukrainian territories, and Lublin. In addition, some 1,245 Orthodox emigrated from Polissia, where, as noted, the overwhelmingly Orthodox Ukrainians constituted nearly two-thirds of the population. It is not absolutely clear who the minority Roman Catholics were in Polissia, but it is probable that they, like many of the Roman Catholic overseas emigrants of the Navahrudak and Bialystok palatinates, were Belarusians. Given the Ukrainian share of the Polissian population and taking into account the possible origins of the Roman Catholics, it can be concluded that approximately 65%-70% (809-871) of the overseas Orthodox emigrants from Polissia were ethnic Ukrainians. Therefore, perhaps as many as 85% of all Orthodox overseas emigrants were of Ukrainian background, and it would be reasonable to conclude on that basis that an estimated 85% of the Orthodox, or 21,335 individuals, emigrating to Argentina were similarly of that nationality. Should this thesis be accepted, then Ukrainians constituted a total of 41,335 of the Greek Catholics and Orthodox who, according to Polish official statistical data, emigrated to Argentina in the period 1927-1938. This is important to stress for no other reason than to rectify the conventional practice of presenting the nationality proportions of Polish emigration to Argentina, which tends to use religious affiliation as the determining guide.[148] It is now clear that a large number of Belarusians, and undoubtedly Lithuanians from the Vilnius region, would have been included among the Roman Catholics, thereby reducing the number of Poles. The revised proportions, from what can be established in the period 1927-1938 on the basis of religious affiliations, should appear as follows: Ukrainians: 41,335 or 36.5%, Jews: 33,700 or 29.7%, Germans somewhere between 3,000 and 4,000 or 2.6%-3.5% (because, as will become apparent in Chapter Four, there were some Ukrainian emigrants, at least, who were Protestants), Belarusians, Poles, and Lithuanians: 33,665 or 29.7%, and 400 or .3% unknown.

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[148] Stanislao Pyzik, a widely used source on the topic of Polish immigration into Argentina, presents the proportions as follows (in this case for the period 1920-1958, although only for 1927-1938 would this information be readily available): 20% for Poles, 35% Ukrainians and Belarusians, and 45% Jews. Pyzik, *Los polacos en la Republica Argentina*, 245. Carmona, in his "La falsa nacionalidad del extranjero," 116, believes, somewhat perplexingly, that Pyzik's (the first edition of whose book was published in 1944) proportions closely match those provided in *Polonia contemporánea* published by the Polish-Latin American Chamber of Commerce in Warsaw in 1932. According to this source, as Carmona quotes it, "real Poles of the Roman Catholic faith" accounted for 25%, "Ruthenians" of the Greek Catholic and Orthodox faith comprised 45-50%, and Jews a further 25-30%. Carmona then refers (page 117) to a work by Vasylyk, where the proportions given correspond "almost exactly" to the aforementioned publication of 1932,

### Sources on Ukrainian emigration from Poland before 1927

Because Polish statistics on emigrants prior to 1927 do not include religious affiliations it is more difficult to devise a hypothesis of the nationalities of these emigrants. Alternative data, however, do provide some useful points of reference. The Western Ukrainian periodical, *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, which covered trends in Ukrainian emigration from Poland, reported in 1928 that of the more than 50,000 Polish

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adding that Vasylyk's "had the advantage that it was conceived totally independent" from it. In the study concerned by Vasylyk ("Skilkist ukrainskykh poselentsiv i ikh nashchadkiv v Argentini," *Ukrainskyi samostiinyk* no. 4, 1967), the proportions on page 3 of the article, "45% Jews, 35% Ukrainians and Belarusians," do not resemble those of the 1932 publication, but they are identical to Pyzik's, although Vasylyk does not cite him in the article. Thus, rather than having conceived of them independently, Vasylyk derived his proportions from Pyzik: in Vasylyk's book, *Ukrainski poselennia v Argentini*, 21, the porportions (converted into absolute numbers) are repeated and Pyzik cited as a source.

citizens entering Argentina between 1921 and 1927, about 20,000 (40%) were Ukrainians.[149] A student of Polish immigration into Argentina refers to a calculation by the Polish Consul in Buenos Aires, Roman Mazurkiewicz, that Ukrainians comprised 25-30% of the Polish immigrants in Buenos Aires by about 1926.[150] Considering that many Ukrainians from Poland also settled on the land beyond Buenos Aires and were often engaged in seasonal work across the country, then the figure of 20,000 Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina by 1927, or 40% of the total intake of immigrants from Poland, is not an unreasonable estimate.[151] Accepting this, on the basis of those Ukrainians who can be accounted for, we are now in a position to determine a total number of immigrants. Hence, 61,335 arriving from Poland in 1920-1938, 316 from Romania in specific years of the interwar period (1926, 1929, 1930-1932,

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[149] *Ukrainskyi emigrant,* 17 February 1928.

[150] Izabela Klarner-Kosinska, "Polonia w Buenos Aires," in Marcin Kula, ed., *Dzieje Polonii w Ameryce Lacinskiej* (Wroclaw: Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1983), 224.

[151] The logic of this percentage can be reinforced by recourse to Marta Kowalska's study, "Los judíos y el problema del movimiento migratorio de Polonia a la Argentina (1919-1939)," in *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Jerusalem, August 4-12, 1985), Division B, Volume III (Jerusalem: World Congress of Jewish Studies, 1986), 214. Kowalska suggests that Jews from Poland were more likely than Ukrainians to settle in Buenos Aires, and, coversely, Ukrainians more likely than Jews to settle in places such as Misiones. Therefore, while Ukrainians may have accounted for only 25-30% of the immigrants from Poland in Buenos Aires by 1926, they would have comprised a larger share of the immigrants who settled elsewhere, particularly in the rural districts.

1934-1938), 1,197 Ukrainians from Czechoslovakia (Subcarpathian Rus'), and 5,194 other Ukrainians appearing as a separate entity in Argentine records, together amounting to 68,042.

## Correlation of Eastern European official statistical data with other sources

This total number will not be pushed significantly higher once the gaps with regards to the number of Ukrainian emigrants from Romania and Czechoslovakia in the missing years are filled. An estimate of 1,000 for the number of Ukrainians emigrating to Argentina from Romania during the entire interwar period appears to be credible, if we consider that the 1920s were the peak years of emigration from that country; conversely, 2,000 leaving Czechoslovakia (Transcarpathia) for Argentina may be a little too high,[152] for the same reason that it is unlikely that Ukrainians would have emigrated in the 1930s in numbers approaching the levels of the 1920s. Table 11 indicates the fluctuations in the years of Eastern European immigration during those years for which the most thorough information has been attained from Argentine immigration records, and includes, separately, the rates of departures and finally the net gain.

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[152] This figure is quoted by Vasylyk in "Argentina," 108.

## TABLE 11

Immigrants in Argentina Classified as Poles, Czechoslovakians, Romanians, Russians and Ukrainians, 1921-1938 (Arrivals)

| Year | Poles | Czecho-slovakians | Romanians | Russians | Ukrainians |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1921 | 2,522 | 291 | 1,078 | 1,441 | 149 |
| 1922 | 5,257 | 992 | 859 | 2,239 | 1,182 |
| 1923 | 10,175 | 5,420 | 1,641 | 4,029 | 1,410 |
| 1924 | 6,986 | 1,481 | 1,727 | 2,466 | 262 |
| 1925 | 9,323 | 2,255 | 807 | 2,152 | 267 |
| 1926 | 14,074 | 2,756 | 1,018 | 1,589 | 294 |
| 1927 | 19,100 | 4,564 | 1,785 | 1,608 | 194 |
| 1932 | 2,277 | 504 | 170 | 153 | 5 |
| 1933 | 3,801 | 606 | 799 | 1,492 | 154 |
| 1934 | 4,009 | 921 | 773 | 1,674 | 148 |
| 1937 | 16,380 | 1,299 | 881 | 1,550 | 208 |
| 1938 | 14,356 | 1,030 | 1,281 | 1,863 | 218 |
| Total | 108,260 | 22,109 | 12,819 | 22,256 | 4,491 |

Immigrants in Argentina Classified as Poles, Czechoslovakians, Romanians, Russians and Ukrainians, 1921-1938 (Departures)

| Year | Poles | Czecho-Slovakians | Romanians | Russians | Ukrainians |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1921 | 530 | 175 | 272 | 1,416 | 5 |
| 1922 | 1,066 | 232 | 357 | 1,831 | 17 |
| 1923 | 1,344 | 324 | 544 | 1,911 | 100 |
| 1924 | 907 | 294 | 359 | 1,566 | 18 |
| 1925 | 913 | 268 | 344 | 958 | 24 |
| 1926 | 1,017 | 379 | 461 | 981 | 34 |
| 1927 | 1,362 | 541 | 401 | 820 | 39 |
| 1932 | 1,806 | 629 | 270 | 113 | 3 |
| 1933 | 3,181 | 841 | 736 | 1,352 | 140 |
| 1934 | 2,960 | 853 | 771 | 1,552 | 149 |
| 1937 | 7,877 | 782 | 902 | 1,572 | 170 |
| 1938 | 6,556 | 643 | 1,033 | 1,691 | 203 |
| Total | 29,519 | 5,961 | 6,450 | 15,763 | 902 |

**Balance of Immigrants Classified as Poles, Czechoslovakians, Romanians, Russians and Ukrainians after Departures, 1921-1938**

| Year | Poles | Czecho-slovakians | Romanians | Russians | Ukrainians |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1921 | 1,992 | 116 | 806 | 25 | 144 |
| 1922 | 4,191 | 760 | 502 | 408 | 1,165 |
| 1923 | 8,831 | 5,096 | 1,097 | 2,118 | 1,310 |
| 1924 | 6,079 | 1,187 | 1,368 | 900 | 244 |
| 1925 | 8,410 | 1,987 | 463 | 1,194 | 243 |
| 1926 | 13,057 | 2,377 | 557 | 605 | 260 |
| 1927 | 17,738 | 4,023 | 1,384 | 788 | 155 |
| 1932 | 471 | -125 | -100 | 40 | 2 |
| 1933 | 620 | -235 | 63 | 140 | 14 |
| 1934 | 1,049 | 68 | 2 | 122 | -1 |
| 1937 | 8,503 | 517 | -21 | -22 | 38 |
| 1938 | 7,800 | 387 | 248 | 172 | 15 |
| Total | 78,741 | 16,158 | 6,369 | 6,490 | 3,589 |
| Arrivals | 108,260 | 22,109 | 12,819 | 22,256 | 4,491 |
| Deps. | 29,519 | 5,961 | 6,450 | 15,763 | 902 |
| Balance in % | 73% | 73% | 52% | 29% | 80% |

Source: *Memorias* of the Dirección de Inmigración for 1921-1927, 1932-1934, and 1937-1938

For each immigrant group one can observe a drop in the number of arrivals in 1932-1933 followed by a renewed surge in 1937-1938. The drop can be explained by the Great Depression and restrictive legislation favouring farmers, while the increase later in the 1930s can similarly be attributed to new opportunities for farming, especially in the regions of Chaco and Misiones.

### Correlation of Argentine and Polish statistical data on immigration and emigration

By comparing Argentine statistics on Polish immigration with Polish statistics on emigration, one can detect an incongruence. This is, of course, relevant for the exercise of establishing a more precise number of Ukrainian immigrants, and, in that context, for dispelling any doubts that the immigrants classified as Ukrainians may have originally travelled with Polish passports. Table 12 presents the two compilations side by side.

TABLE 12

Number of Polish Citizens Immigrating into and Emigrating to Argentina According to Argentine and Polish Statistics

| Year | Argentine Statistics | Polish Statistics |
|---|---|---|
| 1919 | 685 [1919-1920 combined]* | 11 |
| 1920 | | 274 |
| 1921 | 2,522 | 2,407 |
| 1922 | 5,257 | 5,407 |
| 1923 | 10,175 | 9,938 |
| 1924 | 6,986 | 6,637 |
| 1925 | 9,323 | 8,820 |
| 1926 | 14,074 | 14,435 |
| 1927 | 19,100 | 20,189 |
| 1928 | 21,744 | 22,007 |
| 1929 | 24,233 | 21,116 |
| 1930 | 16,464 | 13,804 |
| 1931 | 5,327 | 4,423 |
| 1932 | 2,277 | 2,056 |
| 1933 | 3,801 | 1,724 |
| 1934 | 4,009 | 2,056 |
| 1935 | 4,667** | 3,619 |
| 1936 | 7,631*** | 5,929 |
| 1937 | 16,380 | 8,470 |
| 1938 | 14,356 | 7,680 |
| 1939 | 1,239** | - |
| Total | 190,250 | 161,002 |

Source: * Willcox, Walter F., editor, *International Migrations* Vol.I (Statistics) (New York, 1969 [2nd edition]), p.546; the figures pertaining to the years 1928-1931 are drawn from Kowalska, Marta, "La emigración judía de Polonia a la Argentina en los años 1918-1939," *Estudios Latinoamericanos* (Wroclaw) 12 (1989): 259; ** from Lerner, Harold, *The Role of the Poles in the Development of Latin American Civilization* (Ph.D. dissertation, New York University), 1962, p.99; *** derived from "Problemas de la inmigración en nuestro país," *Informaciones argentinas* (Buenos Aires), p.30. In all such cases the numbers refer to immigrants arriving by sea as 2nd and 3rd class passengers.

As these figures demonstrate, there was no sharp divergence in the two computations until 1929, perhaps because from that year many relocations from other countries of Ukrainian settlement (for instance, Uruguay, Brazil, and later Paraguay) took place. Yet even the Argentine figures presented are necessarily incomplete, since for certain years they do not include immigrants who entered the country by routes other than direct overseas travel. Nevertheless they do indicate that a positive calculation of the number of Ukrainian-born immmigrants in Argentina must now transfer to the Argentine statistics for enhanced accuracy, since Polish statistics do not take into account substantial relocations from one country (the original destination) to another once the emigrants left Poland. By applying the same techniques of discerning the Ukrainian proportion in the Polish emigration to Argentina according to Polish statistics -- positing 40% as their share in 1921-1926 and 36.5% in 1927-1938 -- it can be deduced, if one adheres to those proportions for 1919-1926 and 1927-1939, respectively, that Ukrainians constituted a minimum of 71,156 of the immigrants from Poland; and subsequently, when this number is added to the 1,000 from Romania, approximately 1,500 from Czechoslovakia, and the 5,194 classified separately as Ukrainians, it can be said that no less than 78,850 Ukrainians entered Argentina in 1919-1939.

## Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina classified as Russians

It is also plausible that Ukrainians figured among those listed under Russians. Table 11 indicates 22,256 immigrants classified as Russians during much of the course of 1919-1938. That not all were ethnic Russians can be verified by police records pertaining to translation services rendered to immigrants for the obtainment of identity cards between 1921 and 1926. These records distinguish the immigrants by nationality, and "Russians," in turn, are divided into *rusos* (Russians) and *rusos israelitas* (Russian Jews). The numbers of both groups who used such services are reproduced below in Table 13.

TABLE 13

Number of Immigrants Classified as Russians and Russian Jews Using Translation Services Provided by the Police of the Federal Capital of Buenos Aires in 1921-1926

| Year | Russians | Russian Jews |
|---|---|---|
| 1921 | 546 | 835 |
| 1922 | 270 | 1,185 |
| 1923 | 245 | 1,696 |
| 1924 | 264 | 979 |
| 1925 | 98 | 193 |
| 1926 | 194 | 166 |
| Total | 1,617 (24%) | 5,054 (76%) |

Source: *Memoria de Investigaciones 1921-1926* (Buenos Aires: Policia de la Capital Federal)

Immigration records for those years (1932-1933 and 1937-1938) where religious affiliation is stated provide more insights into the composition of the "Russian" immigrants. Table 14 presents the religious affiliation of those immigrants classified as Russians in 1932-1933 and 1937-1938.

TABLE 14

Religion Declared by Immigrants Classified as Russians

| Year | Catholic | Orthodox | Protestant | Jewish | Muslim | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1932 | 31 | 14 | 32 | 46 | - | 2 |
| 1933 | 51 | 20 | 13 | 35 | - | 11 |
| 1937 | 33 | 32 | 22 | 35 | - | - |
| 1938 | 41 | 27 | 25 | 45 | 3 | - |
| Total | 156 | 93 | 92 | 161 | 3 | 13 |

Source: Dirección General de Inmigración, *Memorias* for 1932-1933, 1937-1938.

A relevant observation here is the proportion of Orthodox (the creed to which ethnic Russians as well as ethnic Ukrainians overwhelmingly adhere) relative to the other denominations. It is not clear of which ethnic background the Catholics and Protestants were -- perhaps some were Germans from the Soviet Union or former Russian Empire -- but one should not discount the possibility that a number of immigrants, especially Slavs of other ethnic backgrounds, who had never dwelled within the boundaries of the Soviet Union or its predecessor were misclassified as Russians. Some immigration officials do not appear to have been always consistent in writing their annual reports. Consider the contradiction of one enumeration of 33,152 Russian-speakers entering Argentina in 1923-1927, when only 7,857 "Russians" were recorded as having been admitted in that period.[153] A similar non sequitur was committed a decade later in 1937, when 6,069 Russian-speakers are said to have arrived in Argentina from overseas as 2nd and 3rd class passengers, but only 122 "Russians" of that category were admitted as immigrants that year.[154]

It is very likely that a number of Ukrainians were among the immigrants listed as Russians, as they were before World War I. Those who may have been registered as such include two

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[153] Refers to transatlantic (ultramar) second and third class passengers.

[154] See the Memoria de la Dirección de Inmigración for that year.

Ukrainian mechanics, who, while on an assignment in Vladivostok in the Russian Far East, decided one night to make a dramatic break for Japan, and having successfully reached their targetted destination, by way of Hong Kong relocated to Argentina.[155] Other Ukrainians, fleeing the Stalinist collectivization campaign, sought out the border with China and once detected made a dash for Manchuria. Some of these made their new homes in Argentina.[156] Another Ukrainian refugee who may have been recorded as Russian is Iosyp Shkeda, a native of the Kuban, a region lying within the political boundaries of Russia; he found refuge first in Czechoslovakia and in 1930 emigrated to Argentina, where eight years later he assumed the post of editor of Argentina's first and longest-surviving Ukrainian newspaper, *Ukrainske slovo*.[157]

That such cases would have existed suggests that 80,000 is a reasonable estimate for the total number of Ukrainians whose varied trajectories led them to Argentina with an assortment of documents in 1920-1939.[158] The number of Ukrainian arrivals in this period was certainly not as low as the circa

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[155] Ivan Svit, "Vtikachi-ukraintsi v Mandzhurii," in *Almanakh Ukrainskoho Narodnoho Soiuzu na rik 1980* (Jersey City-New York: Svoboda, 1980), 199-200.

[156] Ibid., 202.

[157] *Iliustrovanyi kaliendar Prosvita na zvychainyi rik 1942* (Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1941), 124.

[158] The arrival at this figure of 80,000 also takes into account any cases of repeat immigration.

40,000 quoted by the leader of one community organization[159] nor as high as 120,000 as claimed by the head of a rival faction, Panas Hubarchuk.[160] In this case an intermediate number can be argued for on a more scientific basis.

The acceptance of this number brings with it two implications for scholarly revision. First, as far as the history of Ukrainian emigration goes, it should now be clear that Argentina, and not Canada, as has traditionally been believed, was the leading recipient of Ukrainian immigrants in the interwar period.[161] And in the context of Argentine immigration history, with 80,000 arrivals, Tables 2 and 3 demonstrate that Ukrainians would have occupied fourth place overall after the Italians, Spaniards, and Germans among the European intakes in the period 1920-1939, although in the decade 1930-1939 they would have risen above the Germans to third place.

### Re-emigration

Tables 2 and 3 also show the net gain of European immigration and the percentages of those who stayed. Once again one is confronted with the exercise of detaching the Ukrainian element from their co-citizens of other nationalities. It can be seen from Table 2 that in the 1920s the Ukrainian group, relative to all other European contingents, had the highest non-return rate at 96%, second only to the very much smaller Sanmarinese group. Table 11 shows that compared with other East European immigrant groups Ukrainians again had the most favourable net gain rate at 80%. A logical question that can be posed is whether one should measure the rate of non-return for all Ukrainians on the basis of the proportion specified for those so classified in Table 11. Caution would be advisable here. Data from the immigration records of 1932-1933 and 1937-1938 relating to 10 immigrants inform that all were professionals or skilled workers of one description or another (or their dependents). Consequently, one can conclude on this basis and from what is known about many of the refugees who entered Argentina (who were the most likely bearers of UNR passports) that the immigrants classified as Ukrainians tended to be more affluent and better educated than their compatriots entering the country with Polish, Czechoslovakian, or Romanian passports (the Union of Ukrainian Engineers, for example, profiled in Chapter Five, was predominantly eastern Ukrainian in composition) and therefore more likely to relocate should realities not meet expectations. Ukrainians travelling as a family unit with enough money to settle on the land were more prone to stay than a bachelor Ukrainian engineer who could quite conveniently take off as times turned tough. A substantial portion of the Ukrainian immigration simply did not have this option: they were too impoverished to even raise the fare with which to return home.[162] Others had, as aforementioned, relocated from other countries to settle in Argentina. The Polish Consulate in Asunción, for instance, estimated that 30% of the 12,000 citizens of Poland who had settled in Paraguay by February 1939 (90% of them Ukrainians) reemigrated to Argentina.[163] According to one source, a little over 10% of the Ukrainian emigrants to Argentina from Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia re-emigrated.[164] Considering this to be the case, then the 20% departure rate for the immigrants classified as Ukrainians should be evaluated as a percentage intrinsic to this group only, and 10% reserved for the other categories. Consequently, 942 is subtracted from 5,136, and 7,486 from 74,864 to give a total net gain, from an original 80,000 arrivals, of 71,572.

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[159] Onatsky, "In Argentina," 1205.

[160] Hubarchuk, Panas, "Ukraintsi v Arhentyni," *Zhovten* no.12 (1956): 68.

[161] For general emigration figures in the interwar period see the entry "Emigration" by V. Kubijovyc and V. Markus in *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* Vol.I, 822-823.

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[162] Mykhailo Vasylyk, "Ukraintsi v Argentini z hospodarskoho pohliadu," *Ukrainskyi samostiinyk* no.3 (March 1966): 4.

[163] Izabela Klarner-Kosinska, "Polonia w Paragwaju," in Marcin Kula, ed., *Dzieje Polonii w Ameryce Lacinskiej* (Wroclaw: Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1983), 329. The relocation of Ukrainians to Argentina from other countries of Ukrainian settlement would explain why Argentine statistics on Polish immigration are at variance with their Polish counterparts. Marta Kowalska's percentages for the Jewish share of the Polish emigration to Argentina, for example, is higher than their corresponding percentages according to Argentine records in those years for which this information can be recovered: 1932 (64.9% compared with 58%), 1933 (76.2% compared with 71%), 1937 (28.7% compared with 20%) and 1938 (28.3% compared with 22%), even though the numbers of Jews reaching their destination in Argentina is almost commensurate to the number registered as having left Poland in those years. See Marta Kowalska, "La emigración judía de Polonia a la Argentina en los años 1918-1939," *Estudios Latinoamericanos* 12 (1989): 249-272. It should follow then that the proportion of Ukrainians in the total Polish immigration was considerably higher once the newcomers arrived to Argentina.

[164] V. Kubijovyc and V. Markus, "Emigration," 822.

That figure is quite remarkable, because aside from insinuating that Ukrainians had the most favourable rate of non-return of all the sizable European groups then immigrating to Argentina (and therefore constituted the most stable immigration), they were, once departures are accounted for, the third largest European immigrant group after the Italians and Spaniards in 1920-1939 and singularly the largest contingent to immigrate in the 1930s.

## Regional distribution of Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina

Argentine official data on the characteristics of the immigrants from Poland can give us an inkling of the distribution patterns of Ukrainians. Table 15 (drawing on the same sources as for Table 4) presents the intended regional destinations of boarders from Poland at the Hotel de Inmigrantes.

## TABLE 15

### Regional Destinations of Boarders from Poland in Argentina

| Region | 1923-1927 | 1932 | 1933 | 1934 | 1937 | 1938 | Total | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Buenos Aires | 9,132 | 84 | 27 | - | 186 | 266 | 9,695 | 26.9% |
| Santa Fé | 4,673 | 55 | 7 | - | 244 | 322 | 5,301 | 14.7% |
| Córdoba | 4,534 | 132 | 19 | - | 91 | 162 | 4,938 | 13.7% |
| Mendoza | 1,109 | 19 | 1 | - | 282 | 463 | 1,874 | 5.2% |
| Entre Ríos | 1,436 | 13 | 10 | 1 | 248 | 588 | 2,296 | 6.3% |
| Tucuman | 783 | 14 | 3 | 2 | - | - | 802 | 2.2% |
| San Juan | 111 | 6 | 2 | 2 | - | - | 121 | 0.3% |
| Salta | 291 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 292 | 0.8% |
| Santiago | 551 | 4 | - | - | 8 | 9 | 572 | 1.6% |
| San Luis | 77 | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | 80 | 0.2% |
| Jujuy | 23 | - | - | - | 35 | - | 58 | 0.16% |
| Corrientes | 54 | 5 | - | - | 19 | 40 | 118 | 0.3% |
| La Rioja | 33 | - | - | - | - | - | 33 | 0.09% |
| Catamarca | 24 | - | - | - | - | - | 24 | 0.06 |
| Chaco | 1,273 | 42 | 12 | 40 | 943 | 752 | 3,062 | 8.5% |
| La Pampa | 495 | - | - | - | - | 8 | 503 | 1.4% |
| Misiones | 2,375 | 48 | 25 | 24 | 1,117 | 1,433 | 5,022 | 14.0% |
| Rio Negro | 623 | 2 | - | - | 196 | 86 | 907 | 2.5% |
| Chubut | 73 | 7 | - | 2 | - | 26 | 108 | 0.3% |
| Santa Cruz | 8 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 9 | 0.05 |
| Neuquén | 74 | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 76 | 0.2% |
| Formosa | 43 | - | - | - | 21 | 53 | 117 | 0.3% |
| Tierra del Fuego | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Los Andes | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total | 27,795 | 435 | 109 | 71 | 3,390 | 4,208 | 36,008 | |

Later Argentine data can provide an enhanced guide to where the foreign-born from Poland eventually settled. The national census of 1947,[165] which did not list Ukrainians separately among the foreign-born classified according to their "country of birth," enumerated 111,024 persons born in Poland, the third largest foreign group in the country after the Italians and Spaniards, and 89,983 born in Russia, the fifth largest behind the Paraguayans. Table 16 shows the distribution of the two groups in Argentina, and the share of each group residing in a particular province.

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[165] This census does not contain the detail present in Canadian national censuses, from which hard data on ethnic origin, religious affiliation, language retention, and other particulars can be obtained.

## TABLE 16

### Distribution of Foreign-born in Argentina Whose Birth-places are Classified as Poland and Russia According to the Census of 1947

| Region | Poles | % | Russians | % | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Federal Capital | 51,981 | 46.8% | 25,408 | 28.2% | 77,389 |
| Buenos Aires | 32,496 | 29.2% | 32,319 | 35.9% | 64,815 |
| Catamarca | 27 | 0.024% | 30 | 0.03% | 57 |
| Córdoba | 2,878 | 2.6% | 2,565 | 2.8% | 5,443 |
| Corrientes | 323 | 0.3% | 355 | 0.4% | 678 |
| Chaco | 4,851 | 4.3% | 3,596 | 4.0% | 8,447 |
| Chubut | 652 | 0.6% | 455 | 0.5% | 1,107 |
| Entre Ríos | 1,287 | 1.1% | 8,759 | 9.7% | 10,046 |
| Formosa | 438 | 0.4% | 269 | 0.3% | 707 |
| Jujuy | 78 | 0.07% | 44 | 0.05% | 122 |
| La Pampa | 216 | 0.2% | 3,522 | 4.0% | 3,738 |
| La Rioja | 16 | 0.015% | 29 | 0.03% | 45 |
| Mendoza | 980 | 0.9% | 1,237 | 1.3% | 2,217 |
| Misiones | 6,684 | 6.0% | 3,470 | 4.0% | 10,154 |
| Neuquen | 152 | 0.13% | 109 | 0.12% | 261 |
| Rio Negro | 565 | 0.5% | 563 | 0.6% | 1,128 |
| Salta | 254 | 0.2% | 153 | 0.17% | 407 |
| San Juan | 179 | 0.16% | 204 | 0.2% | 383 |
| San Luis | 63 | 0.05% | 82 | 0.09% | 145 |
| Santa Cruz | 53 | 0.04% | 78 | 0.08% | 131 |
| Santa Fé | 5,989 | 5.4% | 5,767 | 6.4% | 11,756 |
| Santiago del Estero | 270 | 0.24% | 376 | 0.4% | 646 |
| Tucuman | 567 | 0.5% | 581 | 0.64% | 1,148 |
| Tierra del Fuego | 25 | 0.02% | 12 | 0.01% | 37 |
| Total | 111,024 | 100% | 89,983 | 100% | 201,007 |

Source: Antonio Cirigliano, "Población extranjera segun su origen y radicación geografica. Censos 1895, 1914 y 1947," *Revista de la Dirección Nacional de Migraciones* (Buenos Aires) 1, no.3 (1960): 169.

Those classified as "Poles" represented the third largest group in the Federal Capital (numbering 51,981), the province of Buenos Aires (32,496), and Cordoba (2,878) after the Italians and Spaniards among the foreign-born, while the

"Poles" and "Russians" combined were the largest foreign group after the Paraguayans in Chaco (8,447) and Formosa (707), third in Misiones (10,154) after the Paraguayans and Brazilians, and again in Tucuman (1,148) and Santiago del Estero (646) behind the Spaniards and Italians, fourth in Rio Negro following the Chileans, Spaniards, and Italians, and fifth in Mendoza (2,217) after the Spaniards, Italians, Chileans, and Brazilians.

The quest now is for the Ukrainians among the "Poles" and "Russians." The advantage of using the 1947 census for this exercise resides in the fact that the census was conducted on 10 May of that year, before the arrival of the bulk of post-war Ukrainian refugees in Argentina. Therefore, the Ukrainians disguised in the 1947 census as Poles and Russians were almost exclusively the immigrants of the interwar period.[166]Santa It will be observed that the size of the "Russian" category was inordinately higher than the net gain of Russians registered in the interwar period and, correspondingly, the number of Poles reported by the 1947 census was considerably lower than the balance of immigrants recorded by the Department of Immigration. Hence it can be deduced from this discrepancy that many Ukrainians who declared their birthplace as "Ukraine" to census-takers were arbitrarily listed as Russians. It will be further noticed that the percentage of Poles in the Buenos Aires area according to the 1947 census -- 76% is substantially higher than the 26.9% cited in in Table 15. This is attributable, undoubtedly, to the large-scale migration to the metropolis of first of all seasonal and temporary labourers, among others, in the intervening years. The census of 1947 also provides data on the religious allegiances of the Argentine population. Here it was reported that nearly 70% of those who declared their faith as Jewish (many of them, it can be surmised with confidence, also appearing simultaneously as Poles and Russians) resided in the

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[166] Ihor Stebelsky, in his article on general post-war Ukrainian migration, writes that the emigration to South America began "slowly in 1947 but [grew] rapidly in 1948." Ihor Stebelsky, "Ukrainian Population Migration after World War II," in Wsevolod W. Isajiw, et al., eds., *The Refugee Experience: Ukrainian Displaced Persons after World War II* (Edmonton: The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1992), 31. According to Stebelsky (page 57), only 53 Ukrainians were admitted to Argentina in July-December 1947 compared to 489 in the first half of 1948. While this falls short of the 439 Ukrainians another scholar, Leonardo Senkman, believes had entered Argentina in 1947, it is clear that regardless of which figure one ultimately accepts, the post-war influx of Ukrainians had a very negligible impact on the May 1947 census. The discrepancy between the two figures can be explained on the basis of how they were both conceived: Stebelsky's number appears to refer only to the refugees assisted by the International Refugee Organization; Senkman, using Argentine immigration sources, transposes 439 Ukrainians

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from the number of immigrants listed as Russians in 1947. Leonardo Senkman, "La politica migratoria de Argentina y los refugiados judíos, ucranianos y croatas (1945-1948)," in *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Jerusalem, August 4-12, 1985), Division B, Volume III (Jerusalem: World Congress of Jewish Studies, 1986), 228. Other estimates place the entire post-war immigration into Argentina at 5,000-6,000 individuals (Vasylyk, *Ukrainski poselennia v Argentini*, 20), but acknowledge 1948-1949 as the years of the most intensive influx (Vasylyk, "Ukraintsi v Arhentyni," in Athanas M. Milanytch, et al., eds., *Ukrainski poselennia. Dovidnyk* (New York: Ukrainian Center for Social Research, 1980), 284).

federal capital, while the vast majority of the remaining adherents of that faith were concentrated in the province of Buenos Aires, Santa Fé, and Entre Ríos. This is of significance because it suggests that Jews were sparsely represented among the "Poles" and "Russians" outside the parameters of those regions. Consequently, given the Ukrainian proportion in Polish immigration into Argentina, it should follow that they formed a plurality among the Poles and Russians in the remaining regions. It is almost certain, for instance, that they constituted the overwhelming majority of the "Poles" and "Russians" in Chaco, Formosa, and Misiones, considering the attention community sources devote to these regions (as will be alluded to later) and the correlating census data on the number of Orthodox in the provinces (6,549 in Chaco alone), who although in the former two cases would have included Bulgarians (among whom there was also a significant portion of Catholics), were otherwise Ukrainians and, to a much lesser extent, Belarusians.[167]

As for other regions, a Polish source refers to 1,946 Poles, 904 "Ruthenians" [Ukrainians], and 1,000 Jews from Poland in Cordoba in 1929. The same source calculated 5,730 Poles, 3,930

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[167] On the statistics of religious affiliations, see *IV censo general de la nación* t.1. Buenos Aires: Dirección Nacional del Servicio Estadistico, n.d; on Bulgarian Catholics in Argentina, see Rumen Avramov, "La emigración bulgara en Argentina (1900-1940)," *Estudios Latinoamericanos* no.13 (1990): 237-238.

Ukrainians, and 1,600 Jews in the province of Santa Fé that year.[168] The figures for Poles, however, appear to be grossly exaggerated and the Belarusians are not taken into account.

It would be instructive to compare these figures and percentages with contemporary Ukrainian community estimates of its size and distribution. One source estimated that the Ukrainian community numbered 120,000 by the end of 1938 and was distributed as follows: Buenos Aires (Federal Capital) -- 15,000; Avellaneda -- 20,000; Lanus -- 10,000; and San Martin -- 5,000 (all in Buenos Aires province); Berisso (a suburb of La Plata) -- 4,000; Rosario -- 6,000; Misiones -- 25,000; Chaco -- "something-teen" thousand and the remainder elsewhere.[169]Paraguay When converted into percentages the numbers yield the following: Buenos Aires (city) -- 12.5%, Buenos Aires province -- 32.5%, Rosario -- 5%, Misiones -- 20.8%, Chaco -- 12.5% -- 16.6%, and the remainder 12.6 % -- 16.7%. These numbers appear to encompass both Ukrainians born in Argentina as well as those belonging to the first wave of immigrants. In the case of Buenos Aires (city and province) an estimate of 4,000 first-wave immigrants has already been posited and here recourse can be taken to Vasylyk's formula of a 3% natural growth rate for this group,[170] yielding over a period stretching from 1915 to 1938 a projected maximum of 8,122. When the figure of circa 8,000 is subtracted from 54,000, then the reasonable estimate of 46,000 Ukrainian-born immigrants in the city and province of Buenos Aires is conceived. The estimates for Misiones and Chaco include Ukrainians born in Argentina, Paraguay, and, in the case of Misiones at least, Brazil. Therefore, our best guide available at present is the 1947 census, and before departures took place from these Territories to other regions of Argentina after 1938, a safe reckoning of the number of the Ukrainian-born in each would be approximately 7,000 apiece. The estimate of 6,000 Ukrainians in the province of Santa Fé is a credible number for actual immigrants in the region and agreed upon by contemporary community sources.[171] This leaves a balance of 14,000 newcomers to the country scattered elsewhere, with major centres of settlement being Cordoba, Mendoza, Formosa, and Entre Ríos.

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[168] Cited in Krzysztof Smolana, "Za ocean po lepsze zycie," in Marcin Kula, ed., Dzieje Polonii w Ameryce Lacinskiej, (Wroclaw: Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1983), 55 and 57.

[169] Kalendar Svitlo na 1939 rik, 41-42 and Ivan Vuiko, "'Chakerero' v poshukakh shchastia," Vsesvit 6, no. 2 (1963): 57.

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[170] Vasylyk, a trained economist, based his 3% growth rate on Argentina's natural increase in the early decades of the twentieth century. His methodolgy is discussed in his book Ukrainski poselennia v Argentini (Munich, 1982), 21-22, and in his article, "Skilkist ukrainskykh poselentsiv i ikh nashchadkiv v Argentini," Ukrainskyi samostiinyk no. 4 (1967): 2-7.

[171] See, for instance, Ukrainske slovo, 31 March 1935.

Occupational profile of Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina

It is not possible to provide an occupational profile of the Ukrainian immigrants from the data compiled at the Department of Immigration. The Polish Legation in Argentina, however, which took a more active interest in the Ukrainian immigrants -- among other reasons, to determine their attitudes towards the Polish state -- did gather this information. "The majority of the Ukrainian immigration," ran one of its reports to the Ministry of External Affairs in Warsaw in June 1935, "is composed of agriculturalists." And it elaborated:

> Those in the cities, themselves mainly of agricultural background, tend to be engaged in unskilled labour; only a small portion are self-employed (shopkeepers, chauffeurs, liquor retailers, etc), enabling a good number of them to be homeowners in suburbs where many Slavic immigrants live. Apart from this group, there is a small minority of professionals, most of them with tertiary education (often graduates of Czech institutions). They are almost exclusively eastern Ukrainians, ex-officers of Petliura's [Ukrainian People's Republic's] army.[172]

From more intimate composite accounts authored by community activists, a more detailed, albeit still sketchy, reconstruction of the occupational composition of the interwar immigrants is possible. In the city of Buenos Aires, for instance, Ukrainians tended to be employed in a variety of public works projects -- building houses and roads, bridges and canals, underground railway lines, and ports. Others worked in furniture and metallurgical factories and a minority in the service sector (porters, waiters, janitors, domestic servants, etc). Beyond the federal capital, in the province of Buenos Aires, the frigorificos (frozen meat-packing plants) claimed almost exclusively the labour of Ukrainians in Berisso and "a large portion" of those in Avellaneda. Other Ukrainians in Avellaneda, where there were "more home-owners than in the city of Buenos Aires," engaged in the construction industry or were self-employed as artisans. Urbanized Ukrainians in the province of Santa Fé were employed as factory workers or artisans; a number were also occupied in railway construction and as shopkeepers. Those living in the urban districts of Pueblo Nuevo and Saladillo were more likely to be home-owners than their counterparts in the city of Rosario, the regional metropolis. Northwest of Rosario, in Cordoba, the transport sector was a common source of employment for Ukrainian immigrants, the oil industry for those in Chubut (with the "Astro" company their largest single employer), railways, again, and communications for those in Tucuman and Entre Rios.

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[172] "Los ucranianos en la Argentina," Estudios Latinoamericanos 3 (1976): 293.

The latter province, however, also had a considerable number engaged in diversified agriculture as independent farmers, as was the case of those in the Veronica district in the province of Buenos Aires, Mendoza (in viticulture, especially in the district of Boven), Rio Negro (horticulture and orchard fruits, especially in the district of El Bolsón), Chaco (along with neighbouring Formosa) and Misiones (cotton cultivation and Yerba maté in particular, respectively), and Salta. Itinerant seasonal labour, especially harvesting, across the country was commonplace.[173]

Indeed, in a number of national economic sectors Ukrainians appear to have been particularly well represented. They formed a significant share of the foreign-born cotton growers in the country, for instance. A study of Argentine cotton-cultivating chacras, or farmsteads, revealed that in 1935-1936 the "Poles" and "Russians" together accounted for the fourth largest group of operators in the country (after the Argentinians, Paraguayans, and Spaniards), but the third largest in the Chaco region (after the Argentinians and Spaniards) and first in Misiones (58% of the total).[174] Andrei Strelko, in his book on the Slavs in Latin America, contends that 75% of the work force of the oil refineries in Comodoro Rivadavia (in Chubut) and 20% of workers in the frigorificos of "Greater

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[173] M.R., "Ukraintsi v Arhentyni i Uruhvai," in Kalendar 'Svitlo' na 1939 rik, 41-42; Emigrantskyi kaliendar na 1934 rik (Buenos Aires: Bahattia, 1933), 48-49; Mykhailo Danylyshyn, Ukraintsi v Argentyni (Buenos Aires: Dorrego, 1979); M. Vasylyk, "Ukraintsi v Argentyni z hospodarskoho pohliadu," Ukrainskyi samostiinyk no.3 (March 1966): 2-8 and no. 4 (April 1966): 28-31; Ukrainske slovo, 31 March 1935 and 18 August 1935.

[174] "La nacionalidad de los agricultores de los cultivos de algodón," Informaciones Argentinas no.28 (July 1939): 24-25.

Buenos Aires" was composed of Slavs.[175]

How does one explain these occupational and settlement patterns and the preference among Ukrainians for Argentina over other countries in the interwar period? Krzysztof Smolana offers a common interpretation: the objective of the immigrants from Poland in the interwar period was to accumulate some monies and return home. So they sought out those jobs which would provide them with temporary wage-earning opportunities -- road and railway construction work or seasonal harvest labour.[176] Mykhailo Vasylyk concurs: the immigrants came with the intention of earning some cash and leaving after a few years when enough was saved. But the Great Depression intervened to put an end to this plan, whereupon the majority were forced to remain in Argentina.[177] Sources of that period, however, contradict this thesis. Analyzing immigration into Argentina *Ukrainskyi emigrant* in the spring of 1929 explained that the so-called *golondrina* (swallow) cycle of seasonal labour was common to groups such as the

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[175] Andrei Strelko, *Slavianskoe naselenie v stranakh Latinskoi Ameriki* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1980), 72.

[176] Krysztof Smolana, "Los obreros, empresarios y capitales polacos en el proceso de industrialización y de sindicalización de América Latina," in *Capitales, empresarios y oberos europeos en América Latina* (Stockholm: Instituto de Estudios Latinoamericanos de la Universidad de Estocolmo, 1983), 109.

[177] Mykhailo Vasylyk, "Ukraintsi v Argentini z hospodarskoho pohliadu," *Ukrains'kyi samostiinyk* no.3 (1966): 4.

Italians and Spaniards, whose countries were closer to Argentina, thereby making return to the homeland easier than it would be for Ukrainians. Statistics, it said, confirmed this, with 36 of every 100 Italian immigrants and 47 of every Spanish returning to their homes in 1927. By contrast, it continued,

> **Ukrainian immigration into Argentina has a stable character. The Ukrainian immigrant when he goes to Argentina rarely thinks about returning, because his dream is to obtain as much land as possible and farm it.**[178]

Poles were more likely to follow the golondrina cycle than Ukrainians, but even then tended to engage in seasonal labour in France or Germany rather than Argentina, as Jacob Lestschinsky in his study of national groups in Polish emigration had concluded (see Chapter One).

## Socio-economic integration of Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina

Oonce the Ukrainian immigrants arrived in Argentina, however, they did not always fulfil their cherished hope of acquiring land. Ukrainskyi emigrant attributed this to lack of adequate prior planning on the part of the immigrants themselves. There was indeed much land to be had in Argentina, the periodical reported, but the immigrant would be well advised to travel around the country to determine the best value for money.

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[178] Ukrainskyi emigrant, 15 April 1929.

Travel in Argentina, however, was more expensive than the immigrant had taken into account. Consequently, continued Ukrainskyi emigrant, he could be doomed to the city because he simply did not have sufficient funds to both travel in the country and purchase a plot of land. In the city, however, the Ukrainian immigrant was at a certain disadvantage. There, explained Ukrainskyi emigrant, he had to compete with the "better qualified" Italian, Spanish, or Portuguese immigrants for jobs. Many Ukrainians came to Argentina without having learned Spanish first, explicated the periodical, believing, naively, that they could master the language in due course after their arrival or, even worse, that communication was still possible without knowledge of the language. A terrible misconception: how to compete for jobs against those who knew the language when employers were generally more inclined to hire workers who could demonstrate proficiency in the local language? And what of the other handicaps that lack of Spanish induced, asked the periodical. In short, it would make the task of finding a well-paying job and obtaining land that much harder. Be apprised of conditions in Argentina well in advance of moving, Ukrainskyi emigrant advised prospective emigrants to that country, calculate and plan carefully, and avoid travelling as a family unit.[179]

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[179] Ukrainskyi emigrant, 15 April 1929; see also the report by a subscriber to the periodical in Argentina, Mykhailo Charnetsky, in Ukrainskyi emigrant, 15 March 1929.

The concerns about the latter were clarified in a later edition of the periodical, when it published a letter by an immigrant from Volyn. The immigrant, Stefan Hutsman, cautioned against entire families emigrating to Argentina together, as to do so would multiply the risk and victims of misfortune. He arrived in the country in 1928 and travelled 1,500 kilometres in search of opportunities. Having lost hope, he returned to Buenos Aires and through a friend found a job in a factory. Each morning on reaching the gates of the factory he would notice with pity his desperate countrymen standing by the entrance with wives and children in the hope of being hired that day. Bringing over dependents after the family's property in the homeland had been sold, in Hutsman's view, was a precarious move, since it limited the mobility and flexibility with which to find a job, while subjecting more than one person to hardship. It was more prudent for the head of the household to emigrate first, endure all the hardships on his own, and once a livelihood had been secured, then send for the family.[180]

Stories of immigrant failures in Argentina were undeservedly giving that country a bad reputation, even though, in the opinion of *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, Argentina was the second best choice for Ukrainian immigrants after Canada. Indeed, for at least one immigrant who relocated there from Canada, Argentina was actually better.[181] *Ukrainskyi emigrant* tried to reassure its readers that Argentina was really not that much different from a North American country -- buildings in Buenos Aires looked similar to those in Washington, it noted, and one could find a variety of climates and peoples. True, the immigrant could expect to work a 14 hour day, but the quality of life would considerably improve once the first years of austerity had been borne.[182]

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[180] *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, 15 July 1929; see also *Narodnyi visnyk*, 30 December 1927.

## Colonization

Opportunities for land ownership in Argentina were also regularly reported in the Western Ukrainian press. When the Radical Party came to power under Hipólito Yrigoyen (1916-1922), a number of his aides in government were in favour of settling immigrants on the land on a major scale. A Mortgage Bank was set up in 1919 to grant loans to prospective farmers,[183] but many immigrants, Ukrainians among them, often found that the prices for allotments in the central cereal belt (*litoral*), as before World War I, were still exorbitant. Powerful lobby groups representing landed elite interests, such as the Sociedad Rural, succeeded in influencing the Marcelo T. de Alvear administration (1922-1928) to resist the redistribution of landed property in the fertile pampa region.[184] Consequently, those immigrants in possession of a large sum of capital (prices for land in the central Argentine provinces averaged (U.S.) $400 per hectare by 1929)[185] or who were participants in private schemes, such as the ones sponsored by the well known Jewish Colonization Association founded by the Dutch philantrophist, Baron Maurice de Hirsch, in 1891 (and which by 1925 had purchased 617,000 hectares in Entre Ríos, Santa Fé, Buenos Aires, La Pampa, and Santiago del Estero),[186] were the ones more likely to enjoy usufruct in the *litoral*.

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[181] See the account of M. Zakalyk on why he reemigrated in the mid-1920s in *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, 15 September 1932.

[182] *Ukrainskyi emigrant,* 15 May 1929.

[183] Maria Silvia Ospital, "Fuentes para el estudio de la inmigración en la década de 1920 en Argentina," *Revista Interamericana de Bibliografia* 38, no.3 (1988): 364.

Beyond the pampas, however, better opportunities existed for land ownership in the less popular (because of their inhospitable reputation), subtropical frontier regions of Misiones, Chaco, and Formosa. In 1927 the newspaper *Narodnyi visnyk* of Lutsk in Volyn reported on the possibilities of acquiring land in these regions, noting that immigrant families could settle on uncleared land and not need to deliver any repayments for the first two years. Some upfront capital in the value of (U.S.) $300 - $500 would, however, be necessary for basic settlement needs, livestock, and maintenance. Should the immigrant choose to purchase private land in these National Territories he could expect to pay up to $100 per hectare and would require funds in addition for homesteading expenses. The price of land outside these regions, the periodical explained, was even more expensive.[187]

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[184] Ibid.

[185] Magnus Morner, *Adventurers and Proletarians: The Story of Migrants in Latin America* (Paris: University of Pittsburg Press, 1985), 87.

[186] Solberg, *The Prairies and the Pampas*, 94.

The government promotion of official colonization linked with the cultivation of yerba maté in Misiones has already been alluded to. After World War I, from 1923, the Minister for Agriculture, Tomás A. de Bretón, launched a similar campaign in the relatively sparsely populated region of Chaco to stimulate cotton production, in response to which came "hundreds of Germans, Ukrainians, Yugoslavians....transferred at the cost of the State to the closest railway station to their chacra lots, assigned to them by the Ministry [for Agriculture] from Buenos Aires."[188] Nearly 16,000 immigrants from various parts of Central-East Europe arrived in the years 1923-1930 and 4,118 more between 1931 and 1938.[189] An unnamed merchant from Europe, who arrived in Chaco in 1931 and settled in Las Breñas, related in an interview with a local historian in 1972 the factors that motivated him to move there:

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[187] Narodnyi visnyk, 11 August 1927.

[188] Nicolas Inigo Carrera, ed., La colonización del Chaco: Regiones y sociedades (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de America Latina, 1983), 67.

[189] Guido Miranda, Tres ciclos chaqueños (crónica histórica regional), 2nd ed., (Resistencia: Norte Argentina, 1980), 232-233.

> **In the newspapers of Europe there were articles featuring life in South America and the propaganda of maritime companies which sought immigrants. I came because I knew people here and this was true of the majority of others who came, having had friends and relatives here already. There were no colonization companies.**[190]

He himself worked on the land first, saved some money and invested it in commerce. The quote above suggests that there was no official sponsoring of immigrants on the part of the Argentine government for settlement in the Chaco and that this process assumed an informal character. Guido Miranda, an historian of the Chaco, illustrates the experience of Mateo Grabrobriesky [Hrabovetsky], described as a "tall, robust and spirited Ukrainian," to denote the pioneering and sometimes chaotic conditions in that region. Grabrobriesky, upon his arrival to Chaco with his wife and children, chose a site in Colonia General Necochea, ploughing the land while his family passed the day under the shelter of some trees. "Neither hunger, nor rain," wrote Miranda, "nor the weeping of the wee ones were able to dislodge this intruder," who farmed his land with the cotton the Argentine government hoped could find a market abroad.[191]

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[190] Carrera, *La colonización del Chaco*, 76.

The Argentine government was aware of the interest generated in Poland for emigration to Argentina. Assessing Argentina in the context of world emigration patterns in the 1920s, an article in the influential *Revista de economía Argentina* remarked on the rise of Polish emigration to this country, absorbing 24% of all overseas immigrants from Poland in 1925, 35% in 1926, and 44% in 1927. The author of the article, Emilio Lahitte, attributed this increase in part to the national quota system imposed on immigration in the United States,[192] and it is conceivable that there is a concomitant direct correlation between restrictions on Ukrainian immigration into Canada (which had been considerable prior to World World I) in 1920-1925 and again in 1930-1935 and an accompanying steady increase in Ukrainian immigration into Argentina, although the quotas should be considered as only one of many interplaying factors influencing the immigrant to elect Argentina. Other considerations included the prices and availability of land, job opportunities, the cost of fares (for instance, in 1927 *Ukrainskyi emigrant* announced that the fare to Canada cost $200 U.S., compared to $150 for the United

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[191] Miranda, *Tres ciclos chaqueños*, 245-246.

[192] Emilio Lahitte, "Los movimientos migratorios mundiales y la Argentina," *Revista de Economía Argentina* 24, no. 143 (May 1930): 379-381.

States and $120 for Argentina[193]), where close friends and relatives had settled, and the news about prospects from the latter.

The policy of the Polish state towards emigration should also be considered. Polish policy-makers considered Poland to be a "labour-surplus" country and Argentina a "land-surplus" one. Consequently, they gradually grew very interested in Argentina as a recipient of emigration from Poland. An Argentine Legation began operating in Warsaw on 9 January 1925 and later that year remitted a despatch to the Ministry for External Affairs on the subject of emigration. The emigration of the Poles to Argentina, it observed, now occupied first place among all the countries of the Americas, and it had the advantage of being of a spontaneous character, with "the beckoning of heads of families already resident in the Republic" serving as the main force impelling it. The Polish government was more preoccupied with directing the flow of emigration to Europe rather than to South America, it noted, without being aware of the mutual benefits to be reaped by Argentina and the "robust and healthy" emigrants themselves from settlement in that country.[194] In the 1930s, when seasonal migration to Western Europe from Poland had become increasingly difficult, the Polish government assumed a more active interest in promoting agricultural settlement in South America, Argentina included.

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[193] *Ukrainskyi emigrant,* 5 October 1927.

[194] *Memoria presentada al Honorable Congreso Nacional correspondiente al año 1925* T.1 (Relaciones Exteriores) (Buenos Aires: Imprenta de la H. Camara de Diputados, 1926), 775-776.

## Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina and the Great Depression

Until then the immigrants, particularly those without families or relatives already in Argentina, had to virtually guide themselves in determining where they could settle once their two weeks shelter in the *Hotel de Inmigrantes* had expired. Hryhorii Hrebin, an immigrant from Volyn, arrived in Argentina in 1927 and wandered about the country for four years until finally he satisfied himself with the acquisition of 3 acres of land in Misiones.[195] A letter to a cantor in Galicia by another overseas migrant provides an insight into the transient nature of immigrant life. Writing from Santiago, Chile in April 1926, Mykola Prokopovych informed that he stationed himself in Brazil first, which on the whole pleased him, but finding wages too low and the climate disagreeable, after a year he went on the move again and tried Uruguay, where he spent three weeks, then Argentina. What he saw during his initial two months in Buenos Aires disturbed him: the city was rife with unemployment and his compatriots there were struggling. But should one be fortunate to secure a job, Prokopovych observed, then conditions in Argentina were superior to those in Brazil. He then decided to assess opportunities in Chile and what he encountered impressed him, including the benign climate. His only complaint now was that he had not heard from his wife in over 6 months. Another letter to the same cantor, I.K. Hlynsky, in February 1931 placed Prokopovych back in Buenos Aires. After his brief experiences in Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, and then Peru, he had given preference to Argentina and had for now over 3 years settled in its capital, Buenos Aires. But the political instability in the country, which had brought the military government of José Uriburu to power, worried him, as did the economic crisis which all nationalities in Argentina were suffering. As far as the Ukrainian victims were concerned, there was talk, Prokopovych wrote, of the Argentine government approaching shipping companies to take free of charge unemployed immigrants from Poland back to that country, or any other that would receive them. Meanwhile, Prokopovych had saved enough money to purchase a ticket that would take his wife and child in the opposite direction, to Argentina, but it was not clear whether they had received it nor what their circumstances were.[196]

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[195] *Shliakh*, no.5 (May 1939): 17.

"There are no tourists among Ukrainians," declared a Western

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[196] Stefanyk Library (Lviv), Viddil rukopysiv, op.410, n.21, st. shyf. NTSh. 543/4574-4575.

Ukrainian newspaper sardonically in 1928, "only emigrants."[197] Many were emigrants who aspired to own land and who abroad rented it from the landed aristocracy, or, as was often more the case, bought plots from the state, titles to which were not always guaranteed,[198] or from private companies and individuals. Those who could not afford to buy land nonetheless found alternative work in sectors ranging from the salt mines[199] to the Swift, Anglo, and Armour meat-packing plants. The leader of a pro-Communist organization, Panas Hubarchuk, who writes from this perspective, concedes that a factor distinguishing the decade of the 1920s from that of the 1930s was the employment situation. However low wages may have been, he notes, till 1932 the Ukrainian immigrants could always find work in railway construction across the country or in various public works.[200]

Black Friday on 29 October 1929 proved to be a dark day for more than the speculators in Wall Street's stockmarket. It signalled a snap of the main thread in the web of capitalism that had been spun over much of the world with varying degrees of firmness. As the United States headed for deep economic recession in the 1930s, countries such as Argentina were not immune to the effects of the Great Depression. Hubarchuk, who emigrated to Argentina from his native region of Volyn in 1927, recalls the massive layoffs at the frigorificos, the metallurgical workshops and furniture factories in the course of that decade.[201] By August 1932 the ranks of the unemployed had swollen to 333,997, and the excess of departures from Argentina over immigration that was set in motion from 1932 could do little to deflate that figure.[202]

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[197] *Ukrainska hromada*, 29 July 1928.

[198] See, for instance, *Ukrainskyi emigrant,* 30 April 1930.

[199] For a Ukrainian immigrant's perspective of work in the Argentinian salt mines, see *Ukrainskyi emigrant,* 15 February 1929.

[200] Hubarchuk, "Ukraintsi v Arhentyni," 73.

Enrique Siewers, in his article on unemployment in Argentina during the Great Depression, discerns two groups among the jobless: those who could turn to friends and relatives for support and those who did not not have this recourse. And he elaborates:

> To the latter, who have gradually drifted away from all their connections and have come to look upon their past as another existence with which they have severed every tie, the world turns a strange and hostile face, and many of them have obeyed a natural instinct in gathering together in the camps which have sprung up spontaneously on the outskirts of the larger cities.[203]

Siewers adds that the majority of those who huddled together in the camps were foreigners. In a survey of one of them conducted in November 1934, it was revealed that of 1,625 unemployed workers classified according to nationality, 324 were Argentinians, 69 nationals of other South American countries, 572 of Eastern European origin, 287 Italians, 272 Spaniards, and the rest were divided among 17 other nationalities.[204] Considering that the stateless Ukrainians were the largest Eastern European group to immigrate at the turn of the 1930s it is logical to conclude that they also composed the majority among the East Europeans lodged in the camps, or *villas* as one writer calls them[205] (the largest of which were situated in Buenos Aires, Rosario, Mar del Plata, and San Nicolás), and perhaps the largest single nationality group. It is evident that given their share of the immigrant population, the Ukrainian fraction of the camp interns was considerably disproportionate.

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[201] Ibid., 74.

[202] Enrique Siewers, "Unemployment in Argentina," International Labour Review XXXI, no.6 (June 1935): 787.

[203] Ibid., 798.

Although welfare provisions and unemployment insurance were rare in Argentina (as in North America), some measures were effected by the government to provide a modicum of relief for the camp occupants. In 1932 it set up a Relief Committee which turned over a disused warehouse for shelter for some 2,000 of the 5,000 camp dwellers in the Buenos Aires port district (Puerto Nuevo). Within its premises a kitchen was established, which disbursed free of charge the offal and tripe local slaughter houses had equally gratuitously supplied. The Ministry of War, as its contribution, donated camp beds, some of them laying vacant at night, because, according to Siewers:

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[204] Ibid., 798-799.

[205] Hubarchuk, "Ukraintsi v Arhentyni," 74. Hubarchuk asserts that these camps, which housed 10,000 unemployed workers in 1934, were dismantled by the authorities the following year and many of their remaining displaced occupants shifted to the district of Belgrano. The subject of the unemployment camps is also treated briefly and in a cursory manner in Mykhailo Danylyshyn, *Ukraintsi v Argentyni* (Buenos Aires: Imprenta Dorrego, 1979), 69.

> a great many of the unemployed preferred to continue to live in their ramshackle shelters, firmly opposing all proposals to demolish them, and to find their own livelihood, usually by begging in the streets.[206]

Indeed it had become patently clear to a number of Ukrainian newcomers to the country that vagrancy, not farming was in store for them in Argentina. This was the conclusion reached by Hryts Brunets, who had arrived in 1929 and tried his luck in Santa Fé, at first finding the odd job, but after two years was forced to beg for bread and lead the life of a vagrant, a status he was regularly reminded of by the police who would urge him to move on.[207] Another desperate Ukrainian immigrant tried his utmost to avoid a similar fate, ironically beseeching his wife, whom he had left behind five years previously and whose material conditions he had hoped to improve, to urgently send *him* (U.S.)$100, else he would be forced to take to the street corners and beg when no police were in sight.[208]

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[206] Siewers, "Unemployment in Argentina," 799.

[207] *Ukrainskyi emigrant,* 15 April 1931.

The Ukrainians who by day would roam the streets and be kept alive by charity or by their own wits, and by night, demoralized, pass the night in a subway or under a bridge,[209] had no individual identities as far as unsympathetic observers or self-righteous critics were concerned. To them they were all contemptuously dismissed as *polacos*.[210]

One observer who did not appreciate the *polaco* stigma, but was nonetheless aware of the circumstances in which it emerged, was Bronislaw Mechlowicz, the press attache of the Polish Legation in Buenos Aires. In a special report on the Ukrainian community in Argentina he prepared for the Ministry of External Affairs in Warsaw in 1935, he details the adverse economic conditions that took hold at the turn of the 1930s which rendered Ukrainians, as among the most recent immigrants, particularly vulnerable. They tended to be unskilled, and when companies and factories began to reduce their staff by 40% in 1930, "here again Ukrainians were among the worst sufferers." The consequences of this practice were severely felt:

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[208] *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, 30 November 1931.

[209] For a fuller description of this group, see Vasylyk in *Ukrainskyi samostiinyk,* no.4 (April 1966): 28-29.

[210] See, for instance, the account by Mykhailo Tereshchuk in *Ukrainskyi emigrant,* 30 September 1933.

> **The life of this group of immigrants assumed a truly tragic course. A large proportion of them merged with other unemployed and camped at the Puerto Nuevo, where they scarcely received support from the government.[211]**

## Relief efforts

In common with other countries reeling from the Great Depression Argentina opted for a more Keynesian approach to economics. In 1934 the Relief Committee was replaced by a National Unemployment Board to improve the quality of relief measures. Resembling Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal it supervised a number of public works projects and encouraged the unemployed to settle on the land. Local, long-established communities with a well-integrated organizational infrastructure, such as the Italian, Jewish, and German, were able to alleviate the worst effects of unemployment for many of their members by providing various forms of assistance.[212]

Ukrainians, too, adopted self-reliance methods in an effort to succour the less fortunate among them. In 1930 N. Andrushenko, an engineer by profession, pioneered a "Ukrainian Mutual-Aid" society (*Ukrainska vzaimna dopomoha*) in Buenos Aires located in a house which provided accommodation for the homeless and where it ran an employment information agency, savings bank, and soup kitchen. In less than a year the soup kitchen had served food to over 2,800 and assisted 450 people to find jobs,[213] but sometime in 1931, probably owing to lack of sufficient funds, the society suspended activities. In 1932 the Ukrainian Emigrant Protection Society in Lviv opened a branch in Buenos Aires, the Bureau for the Protection of Ukrainian Emigrants (Biuro opiky nad ukrainskymy emigrantamy). It was headed by Vasyl Mylinsky, a former officer with the Ukrainian People's Republic's army under Petliura who settled in Czechoslovakia, where he graduated with an engineering degree before emigrating to Argentina. Cultivating contacts in the Ministry of Agriculture, Mylinsky interested its head, Antonio de Tomaso, in a project of settling unemployed Ukrainians on the land. He also sought cooperation with the Polish Legation, which subsidized the Bureau's organ, Nashe zhyttia, for a year or so after which it folded.[214] Nashe zhyttia informed that the purpose of the Bureau was to act as an information clearing house on employment opportunities, citizenship procedures, and other general matters relating to the welfare of immigrants. It urged newcomers to register with the Bureau so that it could keep track of their whereabouts or relatives searching for them.[215] One of the major projects the Bureau concentrated on was the establishment of a Ukrainian agricultural cooperative in the vicinity of San Pedro, some 50 kilometres from the city of Tucuman, where it hoped to settle unemployed Ukrainian immigrants. Those Ukrainians who had been jobless for some time and were unable to obtain credit from government agencies or banks were to receive land at favourable rates.[216] The reasoning behind settling indigent Ukrainians on the land was to provide them with some equity and security in aleatory times.[217]

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[211] "Los ucranianos en Argentina," *Estudios Latinoamericanos*, 295.

[212] Siewers, "Unemployment in Argentina," 800.

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[213] Ukrainskyi emigrant, 15 December 1930 and 15 February 1931.

[214] "Los ucranianos en Argentina," Estudios Latinoamericanos, 301-303.

Even Ukrainians with technical qualifications or tertiary education were feeling the pinch of the Great Depression, and they alerted would-be emigrants in Europe with a trade to their declining fortunes. Not only were vacancies limited for engineers, reported the Argentine Union of Ukrainian Engineers in 1931 in a specialized journal in Czechoslovakia, but living standards for those in that profession had fallen sharply.[218] A skilled oil worker who had come from the rigs of Boryslav in Galicia to work in Patagonia confirmed such reports. He had been contracted by various British, Dutch, and German companies, but only on a short-term basis each time and by

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[215] *Ukrainskyi emigrant,* 31 December 1932.

[216] *Ukrainskyi emigrant,* 15 December 1932.

[217] *Ukrainskyi emigrant,* 15 April 1933.

[218] *Ukrainskyi inzhener,* no.2 (1931): 62.

1932, weary of leading the life of a nomad at age 45, decided to warn his brethren in Western Ukraine that they would be better advised to live pitifully at home than face uncertainties and risk hunger abroad.[219]

The Argentine government was equally aware of the immense pressures placed on the job market and had decided to reduce substantially the intake of foreign immigration. A Ministry of Agriculture report in the mid-1930s stated:

> **There can be no question of reopening the doors to mass immigration, for this would injure both the country and the immigrants themselves. It is true that the country needs a much denser population than that which can result from its natural increase alone. But it is equally certain that mass immigration is no longer possible in the economic conditions of the world today. Not until the Republic has solved certain problems arising out of its internal economy will it find a rational basis for the proper selection and distribution of any additional foreign workers that it may need in the future.**[220]

The immigration restrictions that came into effect in 1933 favoured farmers. The new regulations stipulated that persons could enter if 1) they were joining relatives already in Argentina, 2) were former residents returning after a brief absence, 3) were sent for to participate in a settlement project already underway, 4) could demonstrate that they had a contract for the lease or purchase of land, or 5) were in possession of 1,500 pesos.[221]

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[219] *Ukrainskyi emigrant,* 15 September 1933.

[220] Cited in "Immigration and Settlement in Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay: II," *International Labour Review* 35, no.1 (January 1937): 354.

The cash requirement was included to demonstrate that the immigrant had sufficient funds for the purchase of land. A Bill submitted to Congress in September 1936 reinforced the committment of Argentine politicians to colonization. It read in part:

> **Although we must give preference to our own nationals, it is also necessary to encourage the immigration of competent foreign agriculturalists with the necessary capital for developing the land....It is high time to start an influx of immigrants, which is both desirable and necessary for the country.**[222]

It was said that an immigrant with 10,000-15,000 pesos to invest could buy 75-100 hectares of land "in the finest agricultural area of the country," this arrangement being 2 to 5 times cheaper than in Europe.[223] In spite of the economic depression, *Ukrainskyi emigrant* continued to consider Argentina as an attractive place for land settlement. In 1932 it alerted its readers to possibilities in the vicinity of Obera in Misiones, which would soon be linked to Apostoles by railway. State land was being turned over for *yerba maté* cultivation and the immigrant could settle on a *chacra* for around 500 pesos, although an additional 100 was required for the fare between Buenos Aires and Misiones.[224] In the mid-1930s Argentina was deemed a better choice for Ukrainian farmers than Canada, with land costing half as much in the former compared to the latter.[225] The government was particularly anxious to accelerate the colonization process in Chaco and Formosa and was prepared to continue to grant land concessions to colonists willing to grow cotton, a successful commodity which had found a place in the international market: half of what was grown in Argentina in 1934-1935 had been exported.[226] Indeed, at the height of the economic recession, the National Territory of Chaco was one of the few regions in Argentina where an immigrant could be assured of a job. In 1934 a significant part of the cotton crop had to remain unharvested owing to labour shortages there.[227]

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[221] Morner, *Adventurers and Proletarians*, p.88.

[222] "Immigration and Settlement in Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay," 364.

[223] Ibid., 365.

## Ukrainians in Chaco during the Great Depression

In an effort to fill the labour gap and have vacant tracts of land occupied, the Ministry of Agriculure "used all the methods, legal and extra-legal, to colonize the Chaco and other sparsely populated territories."[228] Vasylyk refers to cases where government agencies, in an attempt to direct Ukrainian immigrants to regions such as the Chaco, would resort to such tactics as withholding their passports, compelling the immigrants to appeal to the Polish embassy to intervene on their behalf and have them retrieved.[229]

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[224] *Ukrainskyi emigrant,* 15 February 1932.

[225] *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, 15 May 1934, September 1935, and December 1935.

[226] "Immigration and Settlement in Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay," 370.

[227] Siewers, 804.

Such cases, however, do not appear to have been common. S. Zakydalsky was one of the thousands of Ukrainians who was enticed by the lure of the Chaco without much prodding by government agents. He remembers his bewilderment at the landscape of that subtropical Territory, accustomed as he was to pine, oak, and birch trees, which were absent there. But he also remembers the generous terms for homesteading, which were sufficiently auspicious for him to stay and grow quickly accustomed to the strange surroundings of his new home. When Zakydalsky arrived sometime in the 1920s, state land was being offered in units of 100 hectares at 16 pesos per hectare to be repaid over a period of 6 years. In addition the government provided assistance in the form of cattle grants, other forms of credit and equipment. Those who came with money to spare could purchase land at 60 pesos a hectare and settle as private colonists. In fact, so many immigrants and migrants were setting themselves up as private colonists that the state decided to withdraw some of its generous concessions and incentives. This soon resulted in a polarization, according to Zakydalsky, in the sizes of the landholdings in the region, with some *chacras* as small as 20 hectares and others as large as 1,000 hectares.[230]

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[228] Avramov, "La emigración bulgara en Argentina," 248.

[229] Vasylyk, *Ukrainska poselennia v Argentyni*, 19.

By the time the Great Depression struck it became clear that land alone, regardless of the amount owned, could not guarantee a reasonable livelihood without proper and equitable market facilities. Zakydalsky, writing in 1932, complained of exploitative middlemen (most notably representatives of two giant agricultural monopolies, Bunge y Born and Dreyfus y Cia) who fixed the prices of commodities to the disadvantage of the producers.[231] The frustration he expressed about the prices was shared by other farmers and wage labourers, who began to form *Juntas de Defensa de la Producción* (Committees in Defence of Production). In May 1934, in response to declining cotton prices, which were bringing economic ruin to many small-holders, hundreds of agricultural workers of the Las Breñas, Villa Angela, and Villa Berthet districts refused to sell their produce at the set price. The protesters brought the issue to the attention of the Governor of the Territory, who agreed that the prices were too low and ordered them doubled.[232]

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[230] Zakydalsky, S, "Chako," in *Ukrainskyi kaliendar na rik 1933 (pid redaktsiieiu T. Khomyshyna)* (Buenos Aires: Editorial ucraniana La Fogata, 1932), 84.

[231] Ibid., 85.

But in 1935-1936 the prices dropped sharply again, and the protesters of May 1934 were once more boycotting set prices, except in this instance they were able to win over to their cause, in addition to small farmers, seasonal harvesters, cotton refiners and petty traders on a Territory-wide scale. The dispute had assumed the "character of a general strike against the excesses of the monopolists," and had soon paralyzed the marketing of cotton. Affluent cotton growers, organized into the powerful *Cooperativa Agraria del Chaco* and accustomed to manipulating cotton prices for their own ends, denounced the *Junta de Defensa de la Producción* movement in a communication addressed to the Governor in March 1936, describing its members as "being nothing more than Communists in disguise and almost exclusively of Russian nationality."[233]

Whether this condemnation convinced the Governor or not it was the *Cooperativa Agraria del Chaco's* side he took, adopting draconian methods to deal with the protesters whose same grievance two years earlier had warranted the Territory's political leader's intervention for redress. No mediation recurred in 1936. Instead the police were now allowed to break up the assemblies of the *Juntas*, "detaining, jailing, and torturing the leaders." The indiscriminate use of police powers was evident in the district of Las Breñas, where a raid on local growers, conducted on the pretext of thwarting an attempt to storm the settlement's jailhouse to liberate "foreign agitators," proved to be totally unjustified. Incidents such as this were reported in *La Prensa*, the country's leading newspaper, and soon public pressure mobilized against the authorities in Chaco. Local politicians finally joined the chorus of critics of police excesses and initiated cotton price negotiations.[234]

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[232] Guido, *Tres ciclos chaqueñas*, 262.

[233] Carrera, ed., *La colonización del Chaco*, 93.

## Tragedy in Misiones

More tragic was the outcome of a similar protest on 15 March 1936 in the outskirts of the town of Obera, Misiones. This event, which resulted in fatalities, has been recorded in the annals of Argentine Ukrainian labour history with much the same sentiment expressed by sympathizers of the victims of the Estevan massacre of 1931 in Saskatchewan, Canada (in which two Ukrainians were among the three striking miners killed by the police).[235]

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[234] Ibid., 263-264.

[235] On the Estevan massacre, see S. D. Hanson, "Estevan 1931," in I. Abella, ed., *On Strike: Six Key Labour Struggles in Canada 1919-1949* (Toronto: James Lewis & Samuel, 1974), 33-77; see also Jars Balan, *Salt and Braided Bread: Ukrainian Life in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1984), 96.

*Yerba maté* and tobacco were at the centre of a dispute which led to perhaps the bloodiest confrontation between civilians and the authorities in Obera's history. *Yerba maté,* a green herbal beverage similar to tea, and popular in Argentina, as well as in neighbouring Paraguay, Brazil, and Uruguay, once known as the miracle crop among growers in Misiones, had by 1935 reached the "bust" end of a "boom" cycle. That year an oversupply of *yerba maté* was announced and the government responded with federal decree no. 12236, which imposed limits on its production.

An interpretation by Ukrainian immigrants (themselves indirectly or directly connected with the confrontation) of the course of events leading to the denouement of 15 March follows. In their version of events, decree no. 12236, contravention of which could fetch a hefty fine, necessitated the planting of another crop that could at least partially compensate for the loss of income hitherto guaranteed by *yerba maté*. The only substitute product considered to have an economy of scale was tobacco, so *yerba maté* cultivators switched from farming the green shrub to growing tobacco instead. A problem arose, however, since the buying of tobacco from the cultivators was monopolized by two firms, "Cuarenta y tres" and "Nobleza" who purchased the harvest at a ridiculously low price. At times some monocultural farmers experienced difficulties in selling all their stock of tobacco, which was graded by the buyers in three ranks, leaving them with an unwanted surplus. From December 1935 a drought blazed through Misiones adding further to farmers' anxieties.

In the midst of these troubles, relates one of the informants, Anatol Kotovsky, in his memoirs, two unemployed activists of the pro-Communist Federation of Ukrainian and Belarusian Workers' Organizations, Petro Movchan and Vasyl Koval, arrived in Misiones (presumably from Buenos Aires) to agitate among the tobacco growers. These were told to challenge the paralyzing decree 12236, and press for other demands, such as a stable price for agricultural commodities generally, and tobacco in particular, access to more hospitals (where treatment would be free), schools,[236] and roads.[237] The two activists encouraged the establishment of "committees,"[238] which collectively drafted a letter to the Governor of Misiones, requesting an audience in order to alert him to their plight. The Governor agreed to attend a public meeting of these committees slated for Sunday, 15 March, in Obera. But within a couple of days of the scheduled meeting rumours were circulating that Governor Venazco would not be present to meet the *colonos* in Obera, after all, and that the police had been issued orders to prevent the rally from taking place.

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[236] Anatol Kotovsky, *Na berehakh La-Plata* (Lviv: Kamienar, 1988), 26. The arrival to Misiones of the two activists is not alluded to in the other sources.

[237] Kuzma Babenko, "15-ho bereznia na Obera v Misiones," in *Iliustrovanyi kalendar na rik 1943* (Buenos Aires: Svitlo, 1943), 35.

[238] It is not clear what type of committees these were, but they were probably local "Juntas de Defensa de la Produción."

The *colonos* made their way to Obera on the scheduled day regardless, travelling by foot or in their characteristic horse-drawn carts (known locally as the *carros polacos*), and a few in their pick-up trucks. The march to Obera is said to have had a family atmosphere, the participants being of all ages and of both sexes. Although various nationalities were represented, the majority of the demonstrators were of Ukrainian background.[239] As they approached the town of Obera, the demonstrators formed into single columns and held up placards on which were scrawled their demands. The blue and white Argentine flag was also on prominent display.

But the police were waiting for them. Police Commissioner Leonardo Berón, it is alleged, accepted a bribe of 5,000 pesos from agents of the firms "Cuarenta y tres" and "Nobleza" to deal with "the Communist rabble." As the procession reached the cemetery on the outskirts of the town, a police officer approached the demonstrators and ordered them to halt. The front rows of the procession stopped accordingly, but were pushed forward 50 metres by the ongoing movement and pressure of those behind. At this point, Commissioner Beron, observing from a nearby parked car belonging to a local tobacco merchant, fired a shot into the air from the window as a signal for the police to challenge the demonstrators.

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[239] Kotovsky, *Na berehakh La-Plata,* 26, makes this point, but the other sources consulted, probably to convey the impression that the event had a truly "internationalist" flavour, mention Ukrainians as only one group of many participating without noting the scale of their involvement relative to the other groups.

Mounted police charged the group of unarmed demonstrators, hacking away randomly with their machetes. The demonstrators fled to the woods which flanked the road leading to Obera on both sides. To seal their escape in the woods, police already positioned there torched certain parts as others hunted the fugitives relentlessly on horseback, beating, and in some cases, raping, those they captured.

Among the police or their hirelings were those ready to take potshots at any moving targets. Such transient targets included 14 year old Basilia Sawiska [Vasylyna Savytska], in flight with her father to the woods. She was shot and bled to death. Another victim, Nicolas Olifierczuk [Mykola Oliferchuk], is said not to have taken part in the demonstration at all, but was nonetheless murdered in his home in Colonia Samambaya by the police.[240] The third fatality that day was Iwan Melnik [Ivan Melnyk], also of Colonia Samambaya, who happened to be on his way to Obera to meet with fellow Seventh Day Adventists.

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[240] This is according to Onufrii Melnychuk, "Na chuzhyni," *Zhovten* no.1 (1955): 35.

The reign of terror did not end with the death of the three Ukrainians but continued in the prison cells, where many of the detained are said to have been tortured, and in the nearby Ukrainian and Belarusian settlements, where for a few more days mounted police with lassos are said to have been hounding *colonos* in sight as a sport. In addition to the three deceased, some 400 or so others are alleged to have sustained injuries from the affair.[241]

Yet this is a figure that matches the total number that *La Prensa*, Argentina's best known daily, reported as having participated in the demonstration. The same report said that 1 person died and 6 were injured in the clash between police and demonstrators, and added:

**Communist elements of Russian, Polish, and Ukrainian**

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[241] Kuzma Babenko, "15-ho bereznia na Obera v Misiones," in *Iliustrovanyi narodnyi kalendar na rik 1943* (Buenos Aires: Svitlo, 1943), 36. That page has a picture of the wife and two children Nicolas Olifierczuk left behind. Page 35 shows a picture of 14 year old Basilia Sawiska (with a caption mistakingly giving her age as 12) and page 37 one of Iwan Melnik. The other sources consulted recounting the event include Anatol Kotovsky, *Na berehakh La-Plata* (Lviv: Kameniar, 1988), 25-27, and Onufrii Melnychuk, "Na chuzhyni," *Zhovten* no.1 (1955): 31-36. Ivan Vuiko's text on the event in his article "Chakerero" in *Vsesvit* 6, no. 2 (1963): 62-63, appears to be based solely on Babenko's account.

> **nationality....with a flag and the banner of the Union Obrera Campesina attacked the people of Obera, and this aggression was repelled by the authorities and the people en masse.**[242]

While the informants of the events alluded to above may have exaggerated or misrepresented certain aspects of the March 16 happenings (including the number taking part in the demonstration with one source claiming 3,000), *La Prensa* appears to have given credence exclusively to the police version of the event. Only the regional newspaper of Misiones, *El Territorio,* and the newspaper *Crítica* of Buenos Aires, 25 days after the event on 10 April, are singled out (in the judgement of the informants) as having published balanced reports.[243] The national newspaper, *La Nación*, presented a distorted account, according to one of the informants, because its author was the brother of a tobacco merchant who approved of the police's actions.[244]

The nation's leading newspapers may have convinced many in Argentina of the police's interpretation of what happened on Tragic Sunday, as one writer dubbed it, but the Polish embassy in Buenos Aires remained skeptical. On 1 October 1936 Waclaw

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[242] Cited in Roberto P. Korzeniewicz, "Labor Unrest in Argentina, 1930-1943," *Latin American Research Review* 28, no.1 (1993): 21, n.52. Korzeniewicz gives the year of the *La Prensa* article as 1939 and this is undoubtedly a misprint for 1936.

[243] Babenko, "15-ho bereznia na Obera v Misiones," 36, and Melnychuk, "Na chuzhyni," 35.

[244] Melnychuk, "Na chuzhyni," 35.

Dostal, a member of its staff, wrote to the Argentine Ministry of External Affairs, requesting a clarification of the murders of the three citizens of Poland "among the dead at the hands of the police and some civilians." Neither they nor seven other citizens of Poland, who were subsequently hospitalized, were guilty of anything and thus patently treated arbitrarily by the authorities, he continued. In view of this injustice, the government of Poland wanted to know in what manner would the families of those dead and those afflicted with injuries be compensated, and expressed the expectation that the perpetrators of these crimes would be properly punished.

The Ministry of External Affairs transferred the matter to Argentina's Internal Ministry, which sent the Polish Embassy a copy of a telegram it received from the Governor's office in Posadas, Misiones dated 16 March 1936 that echoed the story printed in *La Prensa*. Except that instead of the 400 demonstrators quoted by *La Prensa*, the Governor's telegram referred to only 200 on horseback, who, when asked by Police Commissioner Beron to disband, responded with gunfire. In the course of a confrontation, which left 1 person killed and 6 injured, the peaceful inhabitants of Obera cooperated with the police in successfully repulsing the hostile mob.[245]

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[245] Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto, Expediente 12 Año 1936: "Colonos polacos asesinados en Obera (Misiones)."

Although it appears that the families of the victims never did receive any form of indemnity, an official inquiry was conducted into the affair that found that Police Commissioner Beron had used excessive force in dealing with the demonstrators, and had him fined 500 pesos.[246] This was hardly the justice the demonstrators and their sympathizers expected. Commissioner Beron, they noted with irony, eventually went on to become assistant to the Police Chief in Posadas, while the tobacco firms "Nobleza" and "Cuarenta y Tres" continued to buy the colonists' tobacco at well below its real value six years after the event -- 1.50 pesos for 10 kilograms (and at times for 20 kilograms), very much as before.[247]

## Nativism and the evolution of the *polaco* stereotype

The Obera incident marked an era in which nativist feeling had increasingly become less tolerant of the *polaco*. The complaint filed by the Polish Embassy in October 1936 was not the first lodged by a diplomatic representative of an Eastern European state intervening on behalf of mistreated subjects. In September 1932 the Czechoslovakian Legation in Buenos Aires asked the Argentine government to clarify the news that "80 citizens of Czechoslovakia had been arrested in the capital of the province of San Juan for the sole purpose of having resisted the practice of their employers in Parque Rivadavia of deducting 90 centavos from their daily wage of 3 pesos and 90 centavos for the mandatory purchase of foodstuffs." These labourers, it added, along with some Yugoslav immigrants, had already been deported to the provinces of Cordoba and Mendoza with no pay.[248]

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[246] Melnychuk, "Na chuzhyni," 36.

[247] Babenko, "15-ho bereznia na Obera v Misiones," 37.

Some five years later the Romanian Legation in Buenos Aires was asked to intercede for an immigrant, Jorge Corbut [Iurii Korbut], arbitrarily dealt with by the police. Corbut, explained the Romanian Legation to Manuel A. Fresco, the Governor of Buenos Aires, "Had gone to visit his compatriot, Nichifor Raciuc [Nykyfor Ratsiuk] at 8.00 p.m....in Avellaneda." Three more citizens of Romania joined him at Raciuc's home, including Corbut's brother, Basilio. Alcohol was allowed to flow freely, and all too soon tempers flared. A violent argument broke out between Raciuc and one of his guests, a person identified only as Felipe. Raciuk called the police, who, when they arrived at his home, arrested Felipe. But before the police arrested him, everyone was searched and documents taken away. Jorge Corbut had all the money he possessed (80 pesos and $1 U.S.) confiscated, too, and efforts to have it returned then and the next day were in vain. He thus took the matter to the provincial police headquarters in

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[248] Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto. Checoeslovaquia. Expediente 13, año 1932.

La Plata, where he was delivered 15 blows to the head and chest for his boldness. Later that same night a police officer paid him a visit, threatening to have him killed if he persisted with his money claim.[249]

The case of one Pole arbitrarily arrested in 1931 is instructive for what it conveys about the image of the *polaco*. The detention of Eduardo Charezinski was presented by the Polish Legation in Buenos Aires as an example of citizens of Poland held in detention on the false accusation of being Communists. According to his account, which the Polish Legation relayed to the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one afternoon, on his return home from work, he was switching buses in the centre of Buenos Aires, and on boarding the second bus was approached by a police agent who had followed him in, and asked to exit the bus. Once they had descended the police agent enquired as to his nationality, to which Charezinski replied "*soy polaco*" ["I am a Pole"]. With no hesitation, the police agent exclaimed, "You are a Communist!", an allegation Charezinski denied profusely. His insistence to the contrary notwithstanding, Charezinski was locked up in jail under threat of deportation.[250]

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[249] Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto. Rumania. Expediente 12, año 1937.

[250] República Argentina. Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto. Polonia. Expediente 15, año 1931.

It is clear from this incident that by the turn of the 1930s the *polaco* stereotype had undergone some modification and was now associated not only with socially incompatible Slavs, but politically undesirable elements, too. There is a modest body of literature that examines the genesis and evolution of the *polaco* stereotype in South America, especially in reference to the Polish, and to a lesser extent, the Ukrainian, communities in the province of Misiones and the neighbouring southern Brazilian state of Paraná. While in the literature this stereotype has been associated primarily with the agricultural settlers of these two regions, it is relevant for the present discussion to place the phenomenon in a larger context for two reasons. First, because the stereotype was formed before the newcomers arrived in the interwar period, and second, because many new Ukrainian immigrants settled in the cities, far from Misiones, and it is therefore important to explain the casting of the *polaco* image in an urban setting.

The Argentine anthropologist, Leopoldo José Bartolomé, wrote of the *polaco* stigma following field research in Misiones in the early 1970s:

> **"Polaco" and "polacada" are in Misiones and even in the whole of Argentina almost synonyms for poverty, slow-wit, irrationality, fanaticisms, etc.[251]**

That poverty should be one of the attributes linked with the

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[251] Bartolome, *The colonos of Apostoles*, 237.

*polaco* typecast confirms one of Krzysztof Smolana's theses for its origins: the low socioeconomic position of "Polish" immigrants in Latin America.[252] It is a thesis that also conforms with historian Tadeusz Lepkowki's model of a hierarchy among European immigrants in Latin America. According to Lepkowski, not all immigrant groups arrived on an equal footing. The Spaniards and Portuguese, in his view, represented one particular category: although members of societies considered at the time of emigration "traditional," they were nonetheless bearers of the culture of the mother countries. The British and the French were another; they were the "elite" immigrants and members of colonial or neocolonial powers. Closely allied to that category were the Germans, who, although they had greater "grassroots" participation than the British and French (a sizeable proportion of whom were entrepeneurs and large-scale capitalists), were nonetheless members of a favoured immigrant group and came from a state that was a leading world power which lent support to its expatriate communities. Finally, the fourth category comprised the Italians, Poles, Yugoslavs, Ukrainians, and others. These immigrants, Lepkowski maintains, tended to be toilers, less educated, and came from states that were considered weak powers or were otherwise stateless.[253] Although Lepkowski had in mind the period to 1914, his model can be applied equally well to the period between the World Wars, except in this case the Italians were now emigrating from a state much strengthened militarily, and the Poles and Serbs, at least, from states where they were the dominant groups rather than national minorities.

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[252] Krzysztof Smolana, "Sobre e genese do estereotipo do polones na America Latina (caso Brasileiro)," *Estudios Latinoamericanos* 5 (1979): 77.

It is important to emphasize this point, because if all groups did not enter Argentina on an equal footing then one could expect that their progress in that country and level of adjustment would be likewise uneven. How the immigrants viewed one another and how they were perceived by observers in Argentina were also influenced, in part, by the economic and political backgrounds of the immigrants.

Another factor Smolana posits for the diffusion of the *polaco* stereotype, at least in Brazil, is Ukrainian and German anti-Polish agitation.[254] Such a claim, based on no documentation, serves to obscure rather than to elucidate the problem. For, how can Ukrainians be accused of fomenting a stereotype which included themselves? The well-researched study of Ukrainians in Brazil by Vasyl Zinko, a prominent priest among the Ukrainian Catholics in that country, affirms that Ukrainians, as well as Czechs and Belarusians, were identified in the public consciousness as *polacos*.[255] The fact that the Brazilian sociologist, Octavio Ianni, is unable in his studies of the *polaco* phenomenon in Paraná (where the majority of the Ukrainians in Brazil dwell) to distinguish between Poles and Ukrainians, and other Slavs, suggests that, indeed, the term encompassed more than the actual Poles.[256] No such imprecision exists in Bartolomé's analysis of Ukrainians and Poles in Misiones, where he asserts categorically that "the term "polaco" does not distinguish between Poles and Ukrainians."[257] Elsewhere in Argentina, however, the designation polacos came to include Jews from Poland, too, a large proportion of whom had settled in Buenos Aires. A Polish visitor to Argentina writing his impressions in 1937, remarked:

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[253] Tadeusz Lepkowski, "Presencia de la emigración polaca en America Latina y la politica cultural de Polonia en este continente," *Estudios Latinoamericanos* 4 (1978): 222.

[254] Smolana, "Sobre e genese do estereotipo do Polones na America Latina," 77.

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[255] Vasyl Zinko, *Ridna shkola u Brazylii (istorychno-pravnyi narys)* (Prudentopolis, Paraná: Tipografia dos Padres Basilianos, 1960), 101. Although somewhat tendentious in places, and concerned primarily with Ukrainian schooling in Brazil, Zinko's study remains the most authoritative work on the history of Ukrainians in Brazil.

[256] See, for instance, Octavio Ianni, "A situação social do polones em Curitiba," *Sociologia* (December 1961): 375-388; in his work, *Raças e classes sociais no Brasil* (Curitiba: Civilizaçao Brasileira SA, 1966), 191 Ianni does in one case make the distinction, but only in reference to a post World War II Ukrainian immigrant, not a typical archetype of a community whose origins in Brazil lay overwhemingly with the first wave (1892-1914) of Ukrainian immigrants.

[257] Bartolomé, *The Colonos of Apostoles*, 237. He does point out (pp.237-238), however, that the two groups reacted differently to the stereotype. Nearly two decades have elapsed since Bartolomé's excellent study was completed in 1974. During a brief visit I made to Misiones (Posadas and Apostoles) in August 1991, I reached the conclusion, based on impressions, that the *polaco* stigma had all but disappeared in that province, and that the word *polaco* was used by Ukrainians in a similar manner to that of its "Bohunk" equivalent in

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Canada. Myrna Kostash, a Canadian of Ukrainian background, who has deservedly earned a reputation as a thought-provoking writer, wrote in 1977, when challenged on her usage of the word "Bohunk," that she used it "the same way blacks use 'nigger' and feminists, 'bitch.' That is, to appropriate it from the mouths of our detractors and render it innocuous." (Myrna Kostash, "Response," Journal of Ukrainian Graduate Studies 2, no.1 (Spring 1977): 89). One can detect a similar practice among Ukrainians in Misiones today with respect to the term polaco, who will now, if at all, enunciate it in jest and with irony. The explanation for this metamorphosis may lie in the changing trends among Ukrainians in Misiones since the time of Bartolomé's study. Among them, growing urbanization and especially migration to the provincial capital, Posadas, a concomitant socioeconomic advancement, and new links with Ukrainians in North America. Indeed, the profile Argentine-born Ukrainians, well entrenched in the middle-class, in Misiones today project is remarkably similar to that of their counterparts in a province such as Alberta in Canada. Ryszard Stemplowski has said that at the beginning of the twentieth century Ukrainians in Misiones had a much lower national consciousness than the Poles who immigrated with them (Stemplowski, "Los Eslavos en Misiones," 390). Quite the reverse is truer now. Pedro Khudyk, the head of the Ukrainian Cultural Association "27 de Agosto" in Posadas, pointed out to me that the Poles have been assimilating fast as witnessed by the steady closure of their organizations, while the Ukrainian community has been experiencing a tremendous boom in cultural activity. This would seem to confirm Bartolomé's finding (see pp. 237-258 of his book) that Ukrainians have reacted to the negative stereotype by fortifying their group's solidarity while the Poles (and this has been argued by Ianni and others of Poles in Brazil, too) have responded by assimilating in an effort to shed the polaco stigma. But one cannot discount the very strong possibility that as the Ukrainian community has grown more confident of its socioeconomic position and identity in the province, many Ukrainians, hitherto posing as Poles, have reidentified themselves as Ukrainians. Whichever of these factors has played the major role notwithstanding, it appears that awareness in public consciousness of Ukrainians as a large, separate entity in the province has increased at the expense of the Poles.

> **Readers of Argentine newspapers fail to be surprised when beside the name of a murdered prostitute, a trafficker in the human trade, an assassinated procurator, or a thief, they find the word "polaco."** [258]

In Buenos Aires, as in other parts of Latin America, the word *polaca* had become a euphemism for prostitute. It was applied above all, Smolana maintains, to the immigrants from Poland of Jewish ancestry.[259] Nora Glickman, who has studied Jewish prostitution in Argentina and Brazil, goes a step further: "*Polaca*," she says, "was the generic name applied to all Jewish prostitutes in Argentina, whether they came from Poland, Russia, or Rumania."[260] And among those who trafficked these (often destitute) live souls between Eastern Europe and Argentina were also Jews of the same regional backgrounds. Perhaps one of the reasons why the whole sordid affair assumed notoriety as a Polish activity is the fact that one of the major operations bore the name "Varsovia," or Warsaw. The members of this underground organization, writes Marta Kowalska in her study of Jewish immigration into Argentina, "were Polish, Russian, and Romanian Jewish traders."[261] Later the Russian and Romanian Jews together founded a separate organization. In the 1920s the "Varsovia" ran 200 brothels with 3,000 prostitutes in Argentina.[262] The Polish embassy in Buenos Aires, in what appears to have been concern over the negative publicity the capital city of the country it represented was receiving by association with the name, approached the Argentine authorities in 1927 with a formal request to have the "Varsovia" group redesignate itself. Anticipating this, the group chose to be renamed as the "Zwi [Zewi] Migdal" Society.[263] It became, until its closure by the authorities in 1930, the largest single illicit brothel-operating business in Argentina and did much, according to one of its historians, Gerardo Bra, to discredit "the Polish name, not only in our country [Argentina], but internationally, too."[264]

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[258] Konrad Wrzos, *Yerba Mate* (Warsaw: Towarzystwo Wydawnicze "Roj"), 1937, 47.

[259] Smolana, "Estereotipo do polones na America Latina," 72.

[260] Nora Glickman, "The Jewish White Slave Trade in Latin American Writings," *American Jewish Archives* 34, no.2 (1982): 178.

There were brothel owners and pimps from other parts of Europe, too, and whose ethnic origins were diverse; similarly, among the victims, the prostitutes, were represented myriad nationalities.[265] And the Ukrainian group was no exception.

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[261] Marta Kowalska, "La emigración judia de Polonia a la Argentina," 268.

[262] Ibid., 267.

[263] Ibid., 268.

[264] Gerardo Bra, *La organización negra: La increible historia de la Zwi Migdal* (Buenos Aires: Corregidor, 1982), 113-114. The subject of the notorious white slave trade in Argentina became the basis of the movie *Naked Tango,* produced in 1991 and subsequently released on commercial video.

Although Ukrainian women were clearly not the worst sufferers, there is a smattering of references to Ukrainian women forced into prostitution in South America already before World War I. Luiz Carlos Soares, in his study of prostitution in Rio de Janeiro, affirms that "the first great band of *polaca* prostitutes arrived in Rio in 1867."[266] Although it is not known whether any Ukrainian women were members of this particular party, the subject of young women recruited by agents to work in Brazilian bordellos towards the end of the nineteenth century is alluded to, albeit in a cursory manner, in another study.[267]

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[265] This point is emphasized in Donna J. Guy's study, *Sex and Danger in Buenos Aires: Prostitution, Family, and Nation in Argentina* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 23-32. At times, Guy's perception of ethnic boundaries is blurred. On p.171 she describes the fictitious white slave, Clara Beter, as a Ukrainian, which is true in the sense that her birthplace is given as Ukraine. But in the sources Guy cites, Beter is identified as a Jew (see, for instance, Cesar Tiempo, *Clara Beter y otras fatamórganas* (Buenos Aires: Peña Lillo, 1974), 24 and Clara Beter, *Versos de una...* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Rescate, 1977), 72. This is important to elucidate for the sake of consistency, because elsewhere in the study ethnic distinctions are drawn, with the Jews, English, French, etc. dealt with as separate entities.

[266] Luiz Carlos Soares, *Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro* (London: University of London-Institute of Latin American Studies Occasional Papers, 1988), 18.

[267] V.O. Borys, "Istoriia ukrainskoi trudovoi emihratsii z Halychyny v Braziliiu v 90-kh rokakh xix st," *Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal* no.8 (1970): 71.

The most concrete references to the practice as it existed in Argentina relate specifically to the post-World War I years. The most detailed account of Ukrainian and other women exploited for the purpose of prostitution is provided by the playwright and writer, Myroslav Irchan, who did not witness the process first-hand, but learned about it from the letters of Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina during his years in Canada. Because it is the most complete record on the subject, it is reproduced in full here.

> Sometime in the second half of 1926, a letter came to the editorial office of a workers' magazine that I was editing in Canada from a western Ukrainian from Argentina whom I did not know. In the letter, which had the address of some Christian mission, the worker asked to have the magazine sent, and if possible, a bit of money, because when he was coming from Europe to Argentina, the ship sank in the ocean and he was one of the lucky few who managed to survive.
>
> I answered his letter and asked him to describe the accident in more detail. From his reply, I learned that the ship belonged to an Italian company and that it was taking to Argentina workers and "white slaves," that is, women and girls who are sold in South America to houses of ill repute, in the same way as cattle are sold. The women (among them, many from western Ukraine) are lured by agents, who promise them good wages for work on plantations, in factories and so on. The more attractive women, for whom a good price can be had, are lured in another way; the agents marry them in Europe, live with them for a while, perhaps even have a child, then they go to Argentina, where the man sells the wife right before her eyes. He either sells her completely, or rents her out for a certain percentage to the owner of a house of ill repute. And these white slaves are helpless. They are traded not only by agents, but priests, nuns, the police, high officials, and landowners; in a word, there is no way out for the slave. All the laws of the Argentine republic are against her. It happened more than once that a woman managed to escape and sought help from the police, only to have the police notify her "husband," that is, the same agent who deliberately married her in Europe then sold her. And, in accordance with the law, the police gave the "wife" back to her "husband," because he had the necessary documents. There are terrible

> **stories.**
>
> **I began to collect materials. True, I have never been to Argentina; that is not possible for the likes of me. So I got in touch with Ukrainian revolutionary workers there, their organization, and asked them to help me. I asked a series of questions, to which I wanted them to send back replies.**
>
> **And I must say that the Argentine comrades helped me very much. Copies of my questions were sent to workers across the country and in response, I received hundreds of letters with extremely valuable material. I also have memoirs of Ukrainian women who endured ten years of slavery, having been sold against their will, and memoirs of Jewish and Polish women workers who were also victims of white slave dealers. In addition, the Argentine comrades sent me hundreds of useful photographs, maps, and city plans, so that I would be able to orient myself, special magazines, clippings from newspapers, songs of modern-day slaves, extremely detailed descriptions of houses of ill repute, specific incidents, everything.[268]**

What is puzzling about Irchan's account is that, with such a wealth of material, and as an editor of a left-wing newspaper, one would have expected the whole episode to have been propagated widely in the Canadian Ukrainian pro-Communist press as yet another example of decadent capitalism. But surprisingly there is no trace of such harrowing stories in two of the periodicals he was linked with, *Robitnytsia* and *Ukrainski robitnychi visti*, between 1926 and 1929, the year he returned from Winnipeg to Ukraine (where he subsequently perished in one of Stalin's round of purges). He did, however, write a short story based on the subject of the "white slaves."[269]

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[268] English translation by Zuzana Kulhankova of Myroslav Irchan's work "Canadian Ukraine," deposited with the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, Multilingual Translation Directorate, Translation Bureau, CMC Department, C&R Branch, 190-192.

Although Irchan probably exaggerated the scale to which Ukrainian women were subjected to sexual exploitation, the matter was of some concern to community leaders. A story about a woman called Paranka, who arrived in Argentina with her father and was subsequently hired as a "domestic" by a perfidious labour recruitment agent, was serialized in the newspaper Ukrainske slovo as a warning of the perils that vulnerable young immigrant women could face in a society where they were heavily outnumbered by men. Her father, whose knowledge of Spanish was limited, signed the papers that turned her over to sexual captivity before he embarked on a journey to Chaco in search of work.[270]

An account by one immigrant woman suggests that the Ukrainian "white slaves" may have become so after their arrival in Argentina, rather than plucked straight from Europe, as was the norm. Tetiana Tsymbal came to Argentina with her husband on 9 July 1923. Like many other immigrants, she boarded in the Hotel de Inmigrantes for several days while looking for a job. One day, as she was seated on a nearby park bench beside a mother and her seven children, an agent of the Immigration Department, who spoke Ukrainian, and a woman approached them. Turning first to Tsymbal, the woman asked whether she would be interested in doing domestic work and if she was single. Tsymbal replied that she was married. The anonymous woman then directed her attention to the mother of the seven children and enquired as to whether her eldest daughter, who was 14 years old, would be interested in such work. The mother responded enthusiastically. The woman then handed the mother a piece of paper on which was written an address, and assured her that in a couple of days her daughter would be taken to visit her family. The girl, taking with her a small bag, departed with the stranger. When the mother's husband returned, she explained the incident, and the two of them went to the Labour Exchange office of the *Hotel*, where further details were supposed to have been left. There was nothing. The husband then tried to track their daughter by verifying the address. It proved to be a fake. The girl never did visit her family, not in two days or ever. "Such was the luckless fate of that girl," Tsymbal recalls, "one which befell not a few of our village girls." [271]

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[269] The story in question is "V poloni morskoi ordy (Uryvok z povisti 'Akuly')," written in 1928, and can be found in Irchan's selected works: Myroslav Irchan, Vybrani tvory (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo khudozhnoi literatury), 1958, 323-332.

[270] "Iak tato donku prodav," Ukrainske slovo, 29 April 1928 - 17 June 1928.

## General impact of the *polaco* stereotype

Whatever the numbers of Ukrainian "white slaves" were, they proved to have no impact on disassociating the image of the *polaca* prostitute from their Jewish counterparts. In Argentina the term *polaco* came to variously denote uncultured, struggling Ukrainian and Polish farmers as in Misiones, politically radical Slavs of the interwar period, and, as far as the term *polaca* is concerned, Jewish prostitutes from Eastern Europe. To what extent critics made a distinction when they used or abused such catch-all terms as *polacos/as* and *rusos/as* is not at issue here. What is important to stress is that often social critics displayed an antipathy to Eastern Europeans of all nationalities, although this was never apparent in formal immigration policy, and that the term *polaco* had resonance across Latin America. This was the case in countries such as Cuba, where a significant number of Jews, Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Poles from Poland had emigrated,[272] but it was also true of countries such as Venezuela and Colombia to which emigration from Poland in the interwar period was negligible. Venezuela discouraged immigration from Poland, convinced, according to one Polish diplomat in 1934, that among such immigrants who called at its ports "prostitutes, gigolos and crooks predominated."[273] Colombia passed a decree in 1936, which divided immigrants between favoured and not favoured categories, Poles included in the latter.[274]

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[271] Tetiana Mykhailivska Tsymbal, *Spohady: Moie zhyttia na emigratsii* (Buenos Aires: Julian Serediak, 1984), 18-19.

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[272] Marcin Kula, "La emigración polaca en Cuba en el periodo de entreguerras," *Revista de la Biblioteca Nacional José Marti* 22, no.1 (1980): 146.

[273] Smolana, "Estereotipo do polones na América Latina," 72.

In Argentina surveys published in the 1960s provide an indication of the low prestige Eastern Europeans enjoyed among Argentinians generally. In 1961 the sociologist Gino Germani conducted a study of the scale of ethnic prejudice among residents of Buenos Aires, the results of which are reproduced below.

TABLE 17

Attitudes Toward Immigrants by Native-born Family Heads. Percentage of Respondents who would "Exclude" the Different National or Ethnic Groups. Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area, 1961.

| National and ethnic groups "excluded" | Low socioeconomic status | Middle socioeconomic status | High socioecon. status |
|---|---|---|---|
| Italians | 12 | 3 | 1 |
| Spanish | 9 | 2 | 0 |
| Jews | 34 | 22 | 14 |
| North Americans | 24 | 13 | 5 |
| English | 18 | 10 | 3 |
| Polish | 17 | 10 | 7 |
| Rumanians | 15 | 8 | 7 |

Source: Gino Germani, "Mass Immigration and Modernization in

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[274] Ibid., 71. The nationalities included in the first, "most desired" category were: Germans, Armenians, Czechs and Slovaks, Danes, Spaniards, North Americans, Finns, French, Dutch, Hungarians, English, Irish, Italians, Japanese, Luxembourgers, Norwegians, Persians, Portuguese, Swedes, Swiss, and from 1937, the Yugoslavs. The not desired group comprised: Bulgarians, Chinese, Egyptians, Estonians, Greeks, Indians, Lithuanians, Lebanese, Latvians, Moroccans, Palestinians, Poles, Romanians, Russians, Syrians, and Turks.

Argentina," in *Latin American Radicalism: A Documentary Report on Left and Nationalist Movements*. Ed.Irving Louis Horowitz, et al., (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), 348.

In interpreting the responses, Germani concluded that the attitudes expressed against the North Americans and English indicated "more of an ideological orientation than an ethnic prejudice," while the negative reactions to the Jews and East Europeans were based more on the respondents' perceptions of "traditionalism" than ideological prejudice.[275] Although Ukrainians are not identified in the study, it is clear that unwittingly they are represented, because, after all, they were the largest East European group to immigrate in the interwar period. Furthermore, Germani's failure to include Ukrainians (but not the far less numerous Poles) is sufficient evidence that if academics were unable to distinguish among Poles, Ukrainians, and others, then it is clear that the generic *polacos* continued to apply to Ukrainians for decades to come, beyond the interwar period. It follows, then, that in those years between the two world wars, there was even less of a popular conception of Ukrainians as a separate entity.

One influential academic who dealt with Ukrainians as an indivisible part of a Polish whole was the then leading

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[275] Scholars can explore this issue further by comparing Germani's survey with one conducted of attitudes towards Germans, Italians, Poles, and Jews by Ianni in the same period. See Ianni, *Racas e classes sociai no Brasil*, 181.

Argentine economist of the interwar period, Alejandro Bunge. In an article he originally wrote for the daily *La Nación* Bunge emphasized Argentina's rapidly changing ethnic composition. Among those whose proportion of the population was increasing, he noted, were the Poles. This was not a revelation he welcomed unequivocably. Repeating the reservations of previous critics, Bunge drew attention to such inexpediences as a preponderence among the "Poles" of unskilled workers, especially agricultural day labourers, illiterates ("almost exlusively"), and finally their rudimentary education, backward culture, and agricultural techniques. In a reprinted version of the article in *La Nación* published in the journal he edited, *Revista de economía Argentina*, Bunge appended a footnote to his statement on the almost exclusive incidence of illiteracy among the Poles. This followed a complaint by the Polish ambassador to Argentina, Ladislas Mazurkiewicz, who pointed out that the percentage of illiterates among the Polish immigrants was less than that for Italian and Spanish immigrants. In light of this remonstrance, Bunge modified his position. In his opinion, the Poles were backward and of little means, but, he conceded, they do have a positive work ethic and are thrifty. Another reason for concern, however, was that a portion of this immigration, without constituting a majority, were susceptible to ideas "originating in Russia," and thus advocates of an ideology which challenged the constitutional and social order of the country. Although the "ideology" (presumably Communism) was appealing to only a minority in the Polish immigration, in Bunge's view "Russian propaganda has found more converts among Polish emigrants, and even among those Poles resident in the country, than among other nationalities."[276] Otherwise, the same principle applied to the Poles as to the Spaniards and Italians, where illiterates among these immigrants should hastily be subjected to a nationalist Argentine education.[277]

## Argentine politics and views on immigration in the 1930s

Bunge had written the article in 1930, the year a military coup had effectively put an end to democratic civilian rule. In the troubled years of the Great Depression, nationalist doctrine appealed to Argentine leaders as it did to politicians in other countries across the world. In the debate over immigration, public officials in Argentina, as they did in North America, often voiced concern on what effect its continued flow would have on the country's ethnic and ideological balance. At the turn of the 1930s, as immigration restrictions became more stringent in Argentina, they reflected on the previous half century of mass immigration and cogitated on the potential value of a selective immigration policy.

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[276] Alejandro Bunge, "La raza Argentina," *Revista de economía Argentina* 24, no.140 (February 1930): 123-124.

[277] Bunge, "La raza Argentina," 23.

Manuel Antonio Zuloaga, an Argentinian of "remote colonial origin," epitomizes the doubts expressed on the merits of immigration into Argentina from its inception in his book on the "Argentine Race." He questioned whether immigration had ever really benefited Argentina, believing that its main contribution to nation-building had been material and ethnic rather than "spiritual." Endorsing Zuloaga's book, originally written in 1931, was the army general, José Maria Sarobe, a firm believer in the "melting pot" concept and in a selective immigration policy contingent on regional needs. Only "strict uniformity," in his view, could make a nation great. The ancient Greeks and Romans had observed this axiom with profit, while the Argentine hero, José de San Martín, who had liberated parts of South America from the Spaniards in 1817-1821, preferred a small, but well-disiplined army over a large, but disorganized rabble. The same principle, Sarobe held, should apply to immigration, where the practice of flinging Scandinavians to the subtropical frontiers and casting Andalucian Spaniards to the country's colder belts would give way to a more rational distribution of the foreign population.[278]

The settlement patterns of Argentina's foreign population and its rate of assimilation are the main motifs in Zuroaga's critique of immigration. The conclusions he reached reveal a major re-evaluation of the traditional liberal immigration policy, which had favoured northern European groups over others and had allowed a congestion of the Buenos Aires area (because the majority of the foreign-born ultimately chose to settle there) to the detriment of other Argentine regions. The British, for instance, were now considered an obstacle to the goal of national unity, the reason being that they either tended to be a transient group, "coming and going whenever they pleased," or, when they did establish stable settlements as in the provinces of Chubut, Rio Negro, and Santa Cruz, were clannish, segregating themselves from the local population and creating their own foreign-language schools.[279] The Germans were more accessible and adaptable than the English, but fiercely nationalistic with a fanatical belief in their supposed superiority.[280] The French, while having left an urban imprint in the country, "convenience themselves before everybody else,"[281] and the Belgians, while in many respects an amalgam of the French and Germans, were "physically stronger" than both.[282] The Syrians and Lebanese were considered to be well-integrated in the country, acquiring rapidly the local customs wherever they settled.[283] Among the Spanish the Basques were singled out as model immigrants, predisposed to sincerity and efficiency, and mentally and physically healthy.[284] The Italians, while otherwise lauded, were blamed for their inability to learn Spanish rapidly enough and then corrupting the Spanish language in Argentina.[285] And as far as the Slavs were concerned, Zuroaga remembered positively the "Russian-Polish" families of *colonos*, who founded stable settlements and formed a strong attachment to the land they toiled. These farming families acquired an education and produced offspring capable of survival.[286]

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[278] Manuel Antonio Zuloaga, Nuestra raza y los problemas de posguerra en la Argentina (Buenos Aires: La Facultad, 1943), 19-22.

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[279] Ibid., 52.

[280] Ibid., 69-70.

[281] Ibid., 69.

[282] Ibid., 53.

But regardless of the relative merits of one group over another, a trait that Zuroaga generally found common to all incoming foreigners was their propensity to settle in the *litoral* regions, leaving the interior either sparsely settled or at the mercy of unassimilable compact masses of alien cultures. He attributed the immigrants' general gravitation to pampa districts (and the transient nature of their immigration) to their singular goal of striking it rich quickly (*"hacer la América"*), on the one hand, and the lack of rival ports as points of entry elsewhere along the Argentine coastline.[287]

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[283] Ibid., 51.

[284] Ibid., 70-71.

[285] Ibid., 80-81

[286] Ibid., 84.

The factor of unacculturated enclaves in strategic corners of the country was alarming to Zuroaga, especially so when the proliferation of these alien clusters was accompanied by a concomitant growth in foreign capital involvement in the Argentine economy. The expansion of foreign language schools, press, and banks, could only bolster the colonial ambitions of the overseas states which supported them, Zuroaga insinuated, and expedite the process of the dismemberment of the country.[288]

To prevent such a national calamity from happening Zuroaga advocated a broad programme of measures to be implemented by the government to restore full sovereignty to the nation. This included the nationalization of foreign concerns in the country, a selective immigration policy, compulsory education to incoming illiterates, the expansion of state schools and communications in the border areas, and tougher citizenship laws.[289]

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[287] Ibid., 36 and 60.

[288] Ibid., 109-112, 136-139.

[289] This is especially elaborated in the second part of his book completed in 1943, pages 290-342.

Zuroaga expressed the so-called "nationalist school" of Argentine official opinion, whose understanding of the "new Argentina" did not always coincide with the interpretations of outsiders. One such clash of perspectives, in this case Polish and Argentine, actuated in 1935, threatened to strain relations between the two countries. On 26 October 1935 the Argentine envoy to Poland and Czechoslovakia, Eduardo Colombres, wrote to the Argentine Minister of External Affairs, Carlos Saavedra Lamas, about an article by Kazimierz Leczycki, a travelling correspondent for Gazeta Polska, a Polish daily "considered to be semi-official," titled "The Social-Political Structure of Argentina." The article, which compared Argentina to a "Ukraine of more remote times," described a land ruled by the latifundia and in which immigrants formed "nations within a nation" by virtue of their self-contained community infrastructures.

Obviously pressing on a raw nerve ending, an indignant Colombres instructed his General-Consul, Andrés Wallace, to draft an appropriate reply to "this nonsense," and recommended that Leczycki never be readmitted into Argentina. Wallace's reply, which was never published, dismissed the contention that immigrants were creating detached enclaves in the country and projected the impression that they were integrating smoothly into the mainstream.[290]

Argentine nativists may have expressed nervousness about the immigrants' slow rate of assimilation, but many of the immigrants themselves did not consider this to be a problem. Diego Abad de Santillán, an immigrant from Spain and a former anarchist activist, like his anarchist colleagues whose numbers once dominated the Argentine labour movement, regarded cultural pluralism to be a progressive societal condition. Argentina was *not* a homogeneous society, he emphatically said, but a cultural mosaic whose multicultural make-up should be viewed in positive terms. The immigrants did not only transform the country economically, he argues, but made possible the accomplishment of an authentically pluralistic society, in which religious and cultural tolerance was endeavoured.[291] It was this pluralism which engendered such possiblities as a southern European immigrant preparing a libretto on a Ukrainian theme, *Taras Bulba*, "for the opera of the Argentine composer, Beruti,"[292] Italian influence on Argentine architecture and cuisine, a French imprint on viticulture in Mendoza, and much more besides.[293] The *colectividades*, the term Santillán and others employ to describe the multitudes of Argentine communities with origins in diverse parts of the world, which together moulded the Argentine nation, founded organizations intending to form a bridge between the "old world" and the new, but which in fact did as much to facilitate immigrant integration into Argentina as they did to draw Argentina closer to the international circuit of cultural and political developments. Santillán, who worked closer with members of the assorted immigrant communities than did Zuroaga, understood well the complementary nature of the elements that forged the identity of the Argentine compound and that is why he used the word *colectividades* in a manner which suggested integration rather than detachment or separateness, and devoid of any "ethnic" or foreign connotations. The Argentine cultural mosaic was the reality to which Ukrainian immigrants arrived in the interwar period. Some observed that if the existence of the *colectividades* was essential for the progress of other immigrant groups, then for Ukrainains, as relative latecomers and a stateless people, the creation of an organized community in Argentina was an even more urgent necessity for their survival and welfare as a group entity.

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[290] República Argentina (Division Politica) *Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto* Polonia. Caja 3530. Expediente 13, Año 1935. At least one Ukrainian immigrant would have appreciated the analogy between Ukraine and Argentina, but not a Ukraine of a more distant time: rather a Western Ukraine of a contemporary era. Having worked for Polish landlords at home and encountered their Argentine counterparts abroad, Vasyl Mylian, a Ukrainian immigrant from the Zhovkva district of Galicia, concluded in a poem he wrote in 1930 that the Polish and Argentine *pany* [landlords] were "two birds of a feather who flew together." TsDIAL, fond 348, opys 1, od.zb.6878. From Mylian's poem on Argentina: "*pany polski i ispanski, maiut odnu ruku, pkhaiut bidnykh robitnykiv, vse na hirshu muku.*"

[291] Diego Abad de Santillán, *Estudios sobre la Argentina (La inmigración Europea. Trayectoria del movimiento obrero Argentino. La Argentina de mañana)* (Puebla, Mexico: Editorial José M. Cajica Jr., S.A., 1967), 14-15.

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[292] Diego Abad de Santillán, *Estudios sobre la Argentina*, 35.

[293] The contributions of various individual groups are recounted on pages 24-249 of Santillan's book.

## Conclusion

Even though statelessness was a condition which distinguished Ukrainians from other Argentine immigrant groups in the interwar period, and the absence of a large, well-established community, except in Misiones, preceding their settlement made their experience different from that of the Spanish or Italians, the characteristics of the Ukrainian immigration in 1920-1939 came to resemble nonetheless those of other Slavic immigration streams. The conclusions Rumen Avramov reached in his study of Bulgarian immigration into Argentina in 1900-1940 can be applied equally well to the experience of Ukrainians in the interwar period. Both groups shared a largely agricultural background, similar social and economic conditions on arrival, and partly because they came later than other immigrant groups and were among the poorest, their entry into the Argentine middle classes, a process being completed in the interwar period by immigrants of other nationalities, was delayed by about two decades.[294]

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[294] Rumen L. Avramov, "La emigración bulgara en Argentina," 225-256. While there is no quantitative data at hand to confirm the point on Ukrainians' delayed entrance into the middle classes, obituaries in the Argentine Ukrainian press contain references to a significant degree of

Ukrainians who had immigrated earlier, like the ones in Misiones, did not experience in the 1920s and 1930s the same degree of hardships described in this chapter for the interwar immigrants. There was even the occasional "success story" of Ukrainian immigrants making good under the strain of fluctuating market forces. One of them was Volodymyr Hnatiuk, the brother of the first Ukrainian Orthodox missionary priest in Argentina, Tykhon Hnatiuk. Volodymyr Hnatiuk arrived in Argentina in 1911 and settled in Misiones where he homesteaded. On a visit to Paraguay he noticed that German immigrant farmers from Russia were successfully cultivating Indian tea. Hnatiuk had already learned how to plant Indian tea in the largely Ukrainian populated Subcaucasus region of the Kuban in Russia before his emigration to Argentina. Taking some seeds with him from his trip in Paraguay, Hnatiuk planted them in the district of Tres Capones in the Department of Apostoles in 1923. The plant flourished in its new environment and soon other farmers in Misiones, mainly of German extraction at first, began to follow Hnatiuk's example. It is not clear whether Hnatiuk was the first to introduce Indian tea growing to Misiones, or indeed, Argentina, but there is little doubt that he was one of its pioneers in the country

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occupational switches among interwar Ukrainian immigrants with varying rates of economic success.

and prospered as a result.[295]

In Buenos Aires, Iosyp (José) Burban exemplifies economic achievement among Ukrainian-born immigrants of the second period. Burban emigrated to Argentina from the district of Bibrka in Galicia in 1922. Like thousands of other Ukrainians he settled in Berisso and worked in one of its *frigorificos*. He then worked in a machine shop in the nearby city of La Plata, until 1926, when he moved to Buenos Aires, working in various metallurgical workshops. In 1930 he decided to found his own workshop specializing in winding machines and electrical coil repairs. The business did well and Burban opened an extension of his workshop elsewhere in Buenos Aires, naming this division "El Gran Dnipro." Burban began to expand to the manufacturing of alternators and is said to have been the first national producer of these electrical generators in Argentina. His firm, incoporated as "José Burban e Hijos SRL" enjoyed still further success after 1958, when one of his sons graduated as an electromechanical engineer and broadened the scope of electrical appliances the company manufactured.[296]

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[295] V. Buzhenko, "Ukraintsi vyroshchuiut chai u Misiones," *My i svit* (December 1956): 38-40; *Ukrainske slovo*, 8 December 1957; and Hr. Shliakhytsky, "Ukraintsi v Misiones," *Iuvileinyi Almanakh 'Zhyttia' na 1973 r.B.* (Apostoles, Argentina: Padres Basilianos, 1973), 77.

[296] *Nash Klych*, 1 November 1979. The firm was renamed 'Burban Argentina S.A.C.I.-FIA' in 1962. Another Ukrainian interwar immigrant, a certain Kovenko, has been credited with inventing a device to run a steel cable into an oil well 200 metres deep, thereby cheapening the cost of gaining access to

Although such virtual "rags to riches" stories existed, they were not typical of the majority of Ukrainian immigrants in the interwar period. The Hnatiuk and Burban cases do illustrate, however, that the allusions to the adversity -- and all writers of the history of Ukrainian immigration concur on this point -- which is said to have characterized a collective immigrant experience in the 1930s, need to be qualified. In so doing, one can reiterate Mazurkiewicz's (Poland's ambassador to Argentina) statement that because Ukrainians were latecomers to Argentina, they were least prepared compared to other groups to cope with the effects of the Great Depression. The Ukrainian immigrants were only beginning to develop, or were attempting to develop, a community infrastructure with a national profile, and at the time of the Great Depression lacked the resources to mitigate the effects of the massive social dislocations that ensued. But *Ukrainskyi emigrant* was correct in its assessment that once the years of austerity were borne then the immigrants could expect their living standards to be raised. This metamorphosis appears to have been set in motion by the mid 1930s and is one of the reasons why more Ukrainians settled in Argentina, including from neighbouring countries, in the 1930s than departed. Land could be attained for prices which were cheaper than the rates at home in the regions of Chaco, Formosa, and Misiones, and cotton cultivation, especially in

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oil sources. See *Ukrainske slovo*, 20 October 1935.

the first two regions, appears to have stimulated the native textile industry, a new source of employment for jobless Ukrainians.[297] *Ukrainskyi emigrant* was also correct in its statement that opportunities were to be had in Argentina should the immigrant come well prepared in advance. One immigrant who took advantage of these opportunities was a former member of the Polish parliament, Iurii Tymoshchuk, who had been elected to the Sejm in 1922 from Volyn and served on the parliamentary Labour and Public Works Committee and then on the Communications Committee.[298] In November 1927, Tymoshchuk uprooted his family and moved to Argentina. In possession of several thousand dollars, he bought land in the province of Santiago del Estero and homesteaded.[299]

Tymoshchuk's case was archetypal of the breed of settlers the Bureau for Protection of Ukrainian Immigrants hoped would gain security by eking a livelihood off their own land. But not all immigrants had the means to do what Tymoshchuk did, pointed out *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, investigating conditions for himself before returning to Argentina with his family, and then, with sufficient resources, buying land.[300]

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[297] Hubarchuk, "Ukraintsi v Arhentini," 74.

[298] See the entry on Tymoshchuk in *Encyclopedia of Ukraine,* Vol. V, 331. The entry inserts a question mark besides the date of his death, which was, according to an obituary in *Ukrainske slovo* (22 October 1939), 12 October 1939 (at 11.00 p.m.).

[299] *Ukrainske slovo,* 22 October 1939; *Ukrainskyi emigrant,* 12 April 1928.

The surge of the textile industry may also be an additional factor which explains the general drift toward the province of Buenos Aires, where many of the factories were located, by the time of the general census of 1947. The census of 1947, as has been discussed earlier in this chapter, has also proved to be a useful complement to the Eastern European emigration data and Argentine immigration records in establishing the approximate scale of Ukrainian immigration into Argentina in the interwar period. The figure of circa 80,000 Ukrainian newcomers in Argentina in the course of 1920-1939 has been based primarily on complete data available for certain years, particularly the Argentine records which take into account relocations in Argentina of Ukrainians (those classified as Poles) from neighbouring countries. Polish (and other Eastern European) records, of course, only refer to the intended destination of the emigrants upon departure. It has not been possible to verify the exact extent of re-emigration of Ukrainians from Argentina, but official and unofficial sources suggest that it was low, and indeed, much lower than the rates for other immigrant groups. The impact of this re-emigration on the figure of 71,572 posited in this chapter for the net gain of Ukrainian-born immigrants in Argentina in 1920-1939 would be negligible, even if the rate were actually higher than suggested earlier in the chapter. Should the rate ever prove to have been greater, the range 71,000-72,000 should still be considered acceptable because compensating for the departures are the Ukrainian arrivals the partial Argentine records for certain years did not document. It has not been possible to locate complete Argentine immigration records (which count the immigrants who entered the country not only as second and third class passengers by sea, but also by river, overland, or by sea as first class passengers) for 1928-1931, even though, as Table 12 in this chapter affirms, these were important years of immigration from Poland. It is also in the realm of probability that some Ukrainians may have entered Argentina illegally, from Paraguay or Brazil, for instance, and therefore do not appear at all in the records.[301] Because this thesis focuses only on Ukrainian-born immigrants, there has been no attempt made in this chapter to speculate on how many of those listed as Paraguayans and Brazilians in the Argentine immigration records and in the 1947 census were of Ukrainian descent.

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[300] *Ukrainskyi emigrant*, 12 April 1928.

On another matter broached in the preceding pages, a final word on the *polaco* issue is in order to view the current chapter in a proper perspective. What was its overall impact, socially and economically, on the Ukrainian immigrant population? Did the stigma retard progress for Ukrainians? The sociologists who allude to the stereotype (Germani, Bartolomé, Ianni, et al.), and who wrote their works at a time (during and in the post-Civil Rights period) when the study of ethnic stereotypes was fashionable in North America, discuss the scale and nature of the prejudice, but do not deliberate on how this prejudice may have hampered the immigrants materially.

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[301] That such illegal immigration existed is confirmed in a police report which refers to the case of one Ukrainian immigrant who entered clandestinely from Paraguay in February 1939. See Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto. Expediente 3, año 1947, caja 19.

There is a wealth of literature that examines the subject of stereotypes in a theoretical framework. American sociologist Ozzie G. Simmons does so in respect to the Mexican Americans, where he concludes that the myriad stereotypes that some Anglo-Americans have held of Mexican Americans served to deter close contacts between the two groups, justify segregation and, ultimately, to create possible discrimination in competition for jobs.[302] There is no evidence that the *polaco* stereotype served to do the same for Ukrainians in Argentina. They were, as this chapter has shown, among the hardest hit by the Great Depression which was reflected in a high unemployment rate. But this was not due to any deliberate policy on the part of the Argentine establishment, because a parallel positive image of the Ukrainian as hard-working and thrifty balanced perceived negative traits. Thus the sedulous Ukrainian immigrants were valued for their labour capabilities, a point emphasized later by Argentine Ukrainian community leaders when projecting the immigrants in a positive light.[303]

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[302] Ozzie G. Simmons, "The Mutual Images and Expectations of Anglo-Americans and Mexican Americans," in John H. Burma, ed., *Mexican Americans in the United States* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman, 1970), 387.

The ideological orientation of the immigrants was more of a concern to the Argentine elite than their cultural baggage, and here a number of laws enacted in the beginning of the twentieth century (Law of Residence in 1902 and the Law of Social Defence in 1910) could discriminate against immigrants (by refusing entry or deporting those considered politically suspect) on ideological grounds. The pro-Communist segment of the community, as the Obera affair has demonstrated, was the most affected by this. That is not to say that the stereotypes did not cause potentially discriminatory situations. A judge in what appears to have been the town of Obera in the 1960s, presiding over the case of a married Ukrainian couple, upon losing his patience in what turned out to be a domestic dispute, uttered: "They say that all you *polacos* are *jodido* [screwed], and now I know it's true."[304] One imagines that such views also circulated in the judicial system in the more tense decade of the 1930s, but the sources consulted do not confirm that a miscarriage of justice resulted from similar expressions of prejudice in the interwar period; nor have there been any references to an immigrant losing or being denied a job on the pretext that s/he was a *polaco/a*. What they do confirm is the ambivalence of a psychologically insecure Argentine elite, concerned over the overwhelming numbers of foreigners entering the country who were slow to assimilate. The Argentine elite feared that immigration would result in a redress of the ideological and ethnic balance which would pose a challenge to the status quo. Such fears, as this chapter has demonstrated, were not unfounded: the elite was forced at the turn of the century to yield to democratic pressures, but once it considered its position too threatened, intervened in the 1930s to reassert its hegemony. With regards to the *polaco* stigma, while it was certainly widespread in Argentina, Table 17 in this chapter shows that overt prejudice towards Slavs was ultimately harboured by only a small portion of the population, in Buenos Aires at least. And among the elite economic factors took precedence over cultural concerns, because Ukrainians continued to be admitted in large numbers throughout the 1930s. The ambivalence of the Argentine elite towards Slavs persisted well beyond the interwar period. In

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[303] See, for instance, Danylyshyn, *Ukraintsi v Argentyni,* 11.

[304] Kenneth J. Ackerman, "Public Culture and the Management of Ethnic Diversity: An Argentine Case," *Cultures et developpement* 3, no.3 (1971): 400. Ackerman refers to the fictitious town of Brilho, which, from the manner in which it

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is described and the date given for its founding (1928), appears to be no other than the town of Obera.

May 1946, in a confidential report the Argentine government had solicited on the issue of renewed immigration, the author recommended a restrictive policy, "so that only those with a similar disposition to our own arrive here, which would not compromise our racial balance and would ensure a level of civilization capable of improving our ethnographic composition and the special character of our nationality."[305] Among those which the report recommended to exclude, according to Leonardo Senkman, were immigrants from the Balkans, "and especially the Poles, to whom were attributed corruption, public disorders, and infringements."[306] But once again the Argentine government put aside such misgivings and allowed the admission of a significant number of Ukrainians in the postwar years.[307]

By this time members of the Ukrainian community in Argentina had mobilized to lobby for their admission, which now had over forty years of organizational experience behind them. The history of Ukrainian organizations is the subject for the following two chapters. The first of these chapters focuses on the character of the organizations initiated by the first wave of immigrants in Argentina to distinguish these from those developed by the second wave, examined in the final chapter.

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[305] Cited in Leonardo Senkman, "Politica internacional e inmigración europea en la Argentina de post-guerra (1945-1948). El caso de los refugiados," *Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos* 1, no. 1 (1985): 111.

[306] Ibid.

[307] It is not, of course, certain whether "Poles" in this context was used in its traditional generic sense, but it is clear beyond doubt that the Argentine government targetted groups such as the Italians with greater enthusiasm than Ukrainians in its postwar immigration policy. For specific examples of how this preference was applied in practice, see Senkman, "Politica internacional e inmigración europea en la Argentina," 114.

Although a discussion of prewar organizations does not fall into the time-frame set for this thesis, it is nonetheless imperative to detail what structures were extant on the arrival of the interwar immigrants. This is essential to understanding the context in which interwar Ukrainian associations were created. Interwar Ukrainians did not turn to existing Ukrainian organizations in Buenos Aires, because there were none with a strictly Ukrainian character. In Misiones, Ukrainian organized life was firmly bound to the church, an institution which Ukrainian radicals of whichever persuasion considered complementary to secular organized activities at best. Furthermore, Misiones was located too far from most of the new centres of Ukrainian settlement, and new activists of the interwar period came to regard Misiones as a "satellite" of and a "reservoir" for their own organizations rather than a potential venue for headquarters. Misiones did, however, serve as a springboard from which three religious denominations -- the Ukrainian Greek Catholic, Orthodox and (after World War II) Evangelical-Baptist -- would expand beyond the region's confines and initiate missions and parishes in other districts of Argentina.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# UKRAINIAN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS: PREWAR

In the chapter on early Ukrainian immigration reference was made to the dispersed nature of Ukrainian settlement, with the exception of the compact clusters in Misiones and the small enclaves in Mendoza. It was in Misiones that the greatest potential for community organization presented itself, precisely because of the compact and stable nature of settlement. And once the first difficult years of pioneering had been borne, the settlers were able to channel their resources to developing familiar institutions that catered to their social and emotional needs.

## Misiones

The earliest evidence of organized activity pertains to attempts by immigrants in Misiones to establish a church in 1904. The proximity of Misiones to the Brazilian state of Paraná, where Galician monks of the Catholic Basilian order commenced their missionary activities among the much larger Ukrainian community from 1897 (the very year Ukrainians began to arrive to Misiones), influenced the character of community organization in that region. Although the Mendoza and Misiones Ukrainian settlements were founded at approximately the same time, it is not clear that their members knew of one another's existence, and the Ukrainian priests who had eventually been sent to Misiones from 1908 do not appear to have ever visited the faithful in Mendoza, at least not until 1940! There is some evidence that at least some of the Ukrainians residing in Buenos Aires were aware of their Misiones compatriots, but there is no trace of any enduring contacts between them.[308] Thus, although there had been more than one centre of Ukrainian settlement in Argentina before World War I, these communities had not been coordinated by any single structure or purpose, whether for reasons of self-absorption (or even self-preservation in the context of early pioneering conditions), lack of resources, or distance.

Conversely, closer ties were developed by the settlers of Misiones with Ukrainians in Brazil. Josef Bialostocki, a Pole appointed by Governor Lanusse as the administrator of the agricultural colony of Apostoles in 1900, may have been mistaken when in 1901 he described the founders of Apostoles as 17 Galician families "looking for a haven from their sad odyssey in Brazil" (because it is an account which conflicts with Stemplowski's and others), but the statement does attest to his perception of the close association of the colonists in Misiones with Brazil, who, according to his calculation, numbered 4,000 (Ukrainians and Poles) in Apostoles and Azara.[309]

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[308] Ivan Mudryi [Iwan Mudri], who in a letter to his sister had given an address in Buenos Aires, appears to have had some contact with the Ukrainians in Misiones between 1899 and 1903. See "Mudryi, Ivan: Lysty do sestry 1899-1903," F. Sydor Hlynsky collection op.683, p.43, Viddil rukopysiv biblioteky V. Stefanyka, Lviv.

The majority of the first settlers in Misiones were of Greek Catholic (Uniate) background, and when the more devout among them directed their attention to religious needs it was naturally the Greek Catholic Church hierarchy in Galicia to whom they first turned.

## Schism

When the first Ukrainian settlers in Misiones arrived they were, as aforementioned, accompanied by Polish immigrants from Galicia. The two groups in the colony of Azara worshipped in a chapel they built together in 1902.[310] The following year, a Polish Roman Catholic priest, Joseph Bayerlein-Marianski, came to tend to the needs of these worshippers. It is said that his efforts at "Latinizing" the Eastern-rite Ukrainian Catholics prompted a campaign by these to press for their own Greek Catholic priests.[311] When the Ukrainian colonists asked Bayerlein-Marianski to arrange for the summoning of a Greek Catholic priest, he is alleged to have retorted: "You will have your priest, when hair grows from the palm of my hand!"[312]

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[309] *Dilo*, 12 December 1901.

[310] Volodymyr Kovalyk, *Vasyliiany v Argentyni* (Buenos Aires: OO. Vasyliany, 1988), 34.

[311] See, for instance, Vasylyk, *Ukrainski poselennia v Argentini*, 47, and Andrii Strelko, "Primeros inmigrantes ucranianos en Latinoamerica," *America Latina* no.1 (1975): 97

Whatever may originally have been their motivation it was clear that by 1904 the Ukrainian colonists decided that it was high time to petition for their own priests, and in this regard they were helped by Bialostocki who personally wrote to the Metropolitan of the Greek Catholic Church, Andrei Sheptytsky. Bialostocki informed Sheptytsky that he had already received assurances from Governor Lanusse in January 1904 that the latter had no objections to "a Ruthenian priest" coming to Misiones so long as he performed his duties under the provisions of Argentine law (a preoccupation that stemmed from the concerns that occasioned the enactment of the Law of Residence in 1902, alluded to in the previous chapter). The colonists themselves mailed a letter to the Metropolitan on 20 March of that year and accompanied it with the names of approximately 300 persons urgently requesting a priest.[313] Similar letters were sent to eparchies in Peremyshl and Stanyslaviv,[314] and in anticipation of the arrival of Ukrainian priests, chapels were built in the vicinities of Las

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[312] Quoted in Kovalyk, *Vasyliiany v Argentyni*, 19.

[313] TsDIAL, fond 201, op.4b, sprava 1531

[314] Kovalyk, *Vasyliiany v Argentyni*, 31.

Tunas and, in 1905, in Tres Capones.[315]

The colonists were disappointed. No priests came and there appears to have been no positive response to the letters. In August 1906 the colonists of Apostoles tried once more. Their Church Committee urged the Metropolitan that if a Greek Catholic priest could not be found, then an Orthodox priest should be dispatched.[316] Again, for whatever reasons, their pleas were ignored. One source posits a shortage of unmarried (as insisted upon by Roman Catholic bishops in the New World) missionary priests and funds as the reason for a lack of action on the part of the Greek Catholic metropoly.[317]

Meanwhile, the Orthodox Bukovynian Ukrainians who had settled in the vicinity of San Isidro (today in the department of Concepción) are said to have persuaded their Galician compatriots of the neighbouring Azara and Tres Capones districts (department of Apostoles) to join them in petitioning for an Orthodox priest. An Orthodox priest, they are alleged to have argued, would in any case charge less for pastoral services.[318]

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[315] V. Kovalyk, "Tserkovno-relihiine zhyttia ukraintsiv v Arhentyni," in *Iuvileinyi Almanakh 'Zhyttia' 1897-1972* (Apostoles: Padres Basilianos, 1973), 35.

[316] TsDIAL, fond 201, opys 4b, sprava 1531.

[317] Kovalyk, *Vasyliiany v Argentyni*, 31.

[318] Ibid., 35.

The priests the settlers had in mind were those subordinate to the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate (it remains an enigma why no priests came directly from Bukovyna where the Orthodox Church had an autonomous status, although shortage of priests may have been a precluding factor[319]). Drawing on much vaster resources than its Greek Catholic rival, the Russian Orthodox Church was able to fill the latter's clerical void among the faithful abroad. The Russian Orthodox had an eparchy in Alaska since 1870, for instance, which sent missionaries to the large Ukrainian settlements in Canada and the United States, whose proselytizing resulted in mass defections.[320]

## The Russian Orthodox Church in Argentina

In Argentina the first Russian Orthodox mission began to function on the New Year of 1889, following a request by the Russian General-Consulate in Buenos Aires to Tsar Alexander III.[321] In 1891 Archpriest Konstantin Izraztsov arrived at the mission in Buenos Aires. With a view to raising the profile of the Church in Argentina, Izraztsov appealed to Tsar Alexander III in 1897 for funds for a new building. The request was approved and the new church building was inaugurated in 1901; President Julio Roca was among the guests at the ceremony,[322] an indication of positive official ties between Tsarist Russia and Argentina.

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[319] The commencement of Russian Orthodox activity among the rural Bukovynian Ukrainian settlers in Misiones parallels a similar contemporary trend among Bukovynian settlers in Alberta, Canada. The Albertan settlers wrote to their Metropolitan in Chernivtsi (Metropolitan Repta) requesting a priest in 1903, but the Metropolitan is said to have replied that there were none to spare. His solution to the problem was "to write to the Russian Orthodox Mission in San Francisco where he was certain that the settlers' request would be granted." Aparrently, the Metropolitan assured these settlers that "the Orthodox faith was the same in all countries and it was irrelevant whether the priest came from Bukowina [sic] or San Francisco." (Anna Navalkowsky, "Shandro Church," Alberta History 30, no. 4 (Autumn 1982): 28.) Probably, the Misiones Orthodox settlers received an analagous response to any specific request for a Bukovynian priest.

[320] For further elaboration on this phenomenon in North America, see Michael Palij, "Early Ukrainian Immigration to the United States and the Conversion of the Ukrainian Catholic Parish in Minneapolis to Russian Orthodoxy," Journal of Ukrainian Studies 8, no.2 (Winter 1983): 13-37.

When the Russian Orthodox mission commenced its activities, there were few Russians or Slavs of Orthodox background in the country to serve. Therefore, the church in Buenos Aires had the liturgy celebrated in Arabic about as frequently as in Russian, as Eastern Christian immigrants from the Middle East came to be regular worshippers in its premises. But as the 1900s progressed and the influx of Ukrainians increased, they, too, were regarded as a natural constituency on which to draw. By 1906 the number of Orthodox Ukrainian parishioners at the church had augmented to the extent that warranted the fetching of I. Milenko, a Ukrainian deacon from the Poltava region in

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[321] A. A. Strilko, "Z istorii diialnosti tserkovnykiv sered ukrainskykh immihrantiv u Latynskii Amerytsi," *Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal* no.7 (1973): 107.

[322] Ibid.

Eastern Ukraine, for assistance.[323]

The significant Ukrainian settlement in Misiones provided a further opportunity for the expansion of the Russian Orthodox Church. As noted, the absence of Byzantine-rite Catholic priests there prompted some Galician settlers to join their Bukovynian neighbours in seeking one of the Orthodox faith. Construction of a stone-clay church in Tres Capones, commenced in 1904, was completed in 1906, whereupon the settlers contacted the Russian diplomatic mission in Buenos Aires for a priest to bless the church. In 1907 Archpriest Izraztsov arrived in the Tres Capones community to perform the first liturgy at the new church. After the church had been blessed, Izraztsov assured the settlers that he could find them a priest; but they had to first register the church in his name and pledge financial support for the prospective priest.[324]

The settlers consented, and shortly thereafter Izraztsov wrote to the Holy Synod in St. Petersburg requesting a priest, "preferably one who speaks the Little Russian [Ukrainian] language."[325] The search for a such a priest concluded its trail at the Volyn Eparchy in the town of Zhytomyr, where

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[323] Ibid.

[324] [Iakiv Lavrychenko,] "80-richchia ukrainskoi emigratsii v Argentyni i Ukrainska Avtokefalna Pravoslavna Tserkva," *Litopys Volyni* no.15 (1988): 148

[325] Ibid., 149.

Archdeacon Tykhon Hnatiuk, a Galician whose parents had emigrated to Volyn in the Russian empire, worked. Fluent in both Ukrainian and Russian, he was instructed to serve the parish in Tres Capones, arriving there in August 1908.[326] Hnatiuk's proficiency in those languages was significant: Russian was the language of communication used with his ecclesiastical superiors, while Ukrainian was the medium with which to proselytize and draw the Misiones settlers into the Russian Orthodox fold. A unilingual Russian-speaking missionary could not be expected to proselytize effectively in a language alien to the settlers. By the time of Hnatiuk's arrival some 600 Ukrainian Greek Catholics had defected to the Orthodox faith[327] and there was potential for more mass conversions to come. The chapel constructed by the settlers in Las Tunas in 1904, for instance, still had no priest.[328]

## The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

Alarmed at the scale of desertions to Orthodoxy, the Papal "internuncio" for Argentina, Archbishop A. Locatelli, approached the Vatican with an urgent plea to bring over a Catholic priest of the Byzantine rite. A Greek Catholic priest from Brazil was suggested.[329] Basilian father Klymentii Bzhukhovsky was officially nominated by the Roman Catholic diocese in the town of Paraná (province of Entre Ríos) as the parish priest for Ukrainians in Misiones. He arrived from Brazil in March 1908,[330] and with his arrival the Ukrainian settlements in Misiones became a battleground of Russian Orthodox, Polish Roman Catholic, and Greek Catholic forces. Bzhukhovsky was able to effect the reversion to Greek Catholicism of many of the converted Orthodox,[331] but so long as Hnatiuk remained in Misiones with his parish, Tres Capones endured as a bastion of a pro-Ukrainian Orthodox movement in Argentina.

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[326] Ibid.

[327] Strelko, "Primeros inmigrantes ucranianos en Latinoamerica," 97.

[328] Lavrinenko, "80-richchia ukrainskoi emigratsii v Argentini," 149.

Father Bzhukhovsky stayed in Misiones less than a year and only a few more Greek Catholic priests followed him in that region before World War II. Each of them, however, was a capable organizer and gradually the number of Greek Catholic parishes proliferated (numbering 11 by 1935), even though at times only a single priest was available to serve them all. Notwithstanding this impressive acumen for organization, at least one student of the Greek Catholic church in Argentina believes that its influence in Misiones should have been more pronounced, blaming the radical, anti-clerical tendencies some immigrants brought with them from the old country for checking its natural growth.[332]

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[329] Andrii Sapeliak, *Ukrainska Katolytska Tserkva v Argentyni* (Buenos Aires: no publisher, 1972), 8.

[330] Ibid.

[331] Strelko, "Primeros inmigrantes ucranianos en Lationamerica," 98.

The shortage of priests was a factor precluding the expansion of the Greek Catholic Church beyond Misiones. Although priests in Misiones had made steady contact with newcomers in Buenos Aires in the interwar period, the first real attempts to institute regular visits there only date back to Father Stepan Vaprovych's tenure in Argentina between 1927 and 1935. In 1930-1934 he had made three visits to the Ukrainian communities in the province of Buenos Aires from his base in Misiones, a thousand kilometres away.[333] In 1935 Vaprovych returned to Galicia to appeal for more missionaries to serve the scattered communities in Argentina.[334] Replacements for Vaprovych in Misiones were found by bringing in two priests from Brazil,[335] but Buenos Aires and the other Argentine provinces remained without a Greek Catholic priest until the arrival in 1938 of the controversial Oleksii Pelypenko, about whom more will be said in the subsequent chapter. To assist the missionary work of the two priests in Misiones, Metropolitan Sheptytsky arranged for the dispatch of two Basilian nuns, Sofronia Erdely and Margarita Fendio. They boarded a ship, the "Chrobry," in Danzig, which left for Argentina on 29 July 1939. This was the last journey the "Chrobry" would ever make to the southern hemisphere. On its return to Poland from Argentina it hit an enemy mine off the coast of France and sank.[336] No additional clergy followed the nuns directly from Europe after the outbreak of World War II on 1 September 1939 until the immediate postwar years.

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[332] Kovalyk, *Vasyliiany v Argentyni*, 38. On the radical-clergy conflicts in turn-of-the-century Galicia, see the study by John-Paul Himka, *Galician Villagers and the Ukrainian National Movement in the Nineteenth Century* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1988). A radical faction grouped around Brazil's first Ukrainian periodical, *Zoria,* and was provided with ready anti-clerical ammunition in the religious schisms in Misiones. In its issue of 2 April 1908 it interpreted the mass defection of "1,000 families to Orthodoxy" as further evidence of the Greek Catholic hierarchy's indifference to the settlers' fate. The leading American Ukrainian newspaper, *Svoboda*, read by Ukrainian settlers in other countries besides the United States, reported on 31 March 1910 that the defection to Orthodoxy "of several thousand Ruthenians in Argentina" and its reverberations were felt in the Ukrainian communities in Brazil.

[333] Andrii Sapeliak, *O. Stepan Vaprovych. Misionar-ispovidnyk* (Rome-Buenos Aires: Editorial Salesiana, 1970), 60-65.

### Reverend Tykhon Hnatiuk and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church

Reverend Hnatiuk's Orthodox missionary work in Misiones did not proceed smoothly. The schism that resulted from the defections to Orthodoxy created ill-feeling between settlers of competing denominations. By 1910 Hnatiuk served a parish in Tres Capones whose faithful numbered 80 or so families, but on the important feast days many more settlers attended the liturgy at his church from other districts.[337] This situation proved intolerable to certain disgruntled elements who endeavoured to stem his influence. These elements, whose identities were never publically disclosed by the missionary, denounced him to the authorities as an anarchist agitator. "One day," wrote Hnatiuk, "a young lad delivered me a note from a school inspector, who asked that I meet him to discuss school matters." He made his way to meet the inspector, but, in his own words:

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[334] Ibid., 66.

[335] Kovalyk, *Vasyliiany v Argentyni*, 53.

[336] *Recuerdo Jubilar: 25 años de la provincia Cristo Rey de las Hermanas Basilianas, 1939-1964* (Buenos Aires: Arevalo), 55-56.

> **I never reached the school, because a policeman stopped and arrested me...I was taken to the police station in the town of Azara. There I was locked in a narrow tin-covered dwelling, or *rancho*. The heat was so intense that I felt like I was roasting in an oven -- it was more torridity than I could bear. But worse than this were my troubled thoughts: what was the meaning of all this? On what possible premise could I be denounced? I then saw the police commissar sign the protocol of charges which had the names of those Ukrainians who put forward these false allegations. In the evening I was told to drop to the ground and my legs were fastened to a block. The following day I was taken on horseback to Apostoles and in the evening had my legs suspended to a block once again. On the third day I was taken to the police station at San José. Here they did not bind me and I was even allowed to wander outside freely. Then on the fourth day I was brought to police headquarters in Posadas. Here they put me in a semi-dark room, full of mosquitos, which aggravated me more than the block or the heat in the *rancho*. At nightfall I was unable to sleep, since I was harassed constantly by the pestilent mosquitos. Respite came during the day, when I could relax and take a**

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[337] "80-richchia ukrainskoi emigratsii v Argentyni i Ukrainska Avtokefalna Pravoslavna Tserkva," *Litopys Volyni* no.15 (1988): 149-150.

stroll outside.[338]

In Posadas Reverend Hnatiuk finally discovered the charges laid against him. He was accused of preaching anarchism from the pulpit and rousing his congregation against the Argentine state. For this, he was told, he could be deported. The threat of deportation was so serious, Hnatiuk recalled, that he had to seek the intervention of Archpriest Izraztsov.[339] But there was little Izraztsov could immediately do upon receiving Hnatiuk's telegram for help at the Russian Embassy in Buenos Aires. The Russian ambassador, Evgen Feodorovich Stein, was away on business in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The matter was considered sufficiently important, however, for Stein, upon learning of Hnatiuk's plight via a telegram from Izraztsov, to cut his Brazilian visit short, return to Buenos Aires, and approach the Argentine Minister of the Interior, Joaquin Gonzalez, to press for Hnatiuk's release.[340] Thus a personal ordeal was ended at the diplomatic level.

The treatment of Hnatiuk by the Argentine authorities contrasted with the positive attention accorded Izraztsov almost a decade earlier with the inauguration of the Russian

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[338] Quoted in S.K., "Misiina pratsia o. T. Hnatiuka. (V desiatylittia z dnia smerty)," *Dzvin* no.5 (38) (May 1953): 6

[339] Ibid., 6.

[340] "80-richchia ukrainskoi emigratsii v Argentyni," 152.

Orthodox Church in Buenos Aires at which the then Argentine head of state participated. In the intervening years the rapid increment of foreign immigration (especially now from Russia) and concurrent heightened labour activity, anarchist in particular, strengthened xenophobic attitudes among the Argentine elite, which were reflected in the special measures it enforced to cope with their fears such as the Law of Social Defence of 1910 (see the preceding chapter). Hnatiuk, although initially a victim of inter-community rivalry, proved also to be a casualty of an anti-foreigner and anti-radical scare that did not formally abate until the election in 1916 of the more tolerant and democratic government of Hipólito Yrigoyen, but resurfaced once more in response to his second presidency in 1928-1930.

Reverend Hnatiuk put aside the incident and continued his pastoral duties as before in Tres Capones. In June 1914 he decided to temporarily leave for Volyn and visit his relatives. The visit proved to be longer than he anticipated, because in August of that year World War I erupted. In the course of his stay in Volyn Reverend Hnatiuk witnessed the fall of the Tsar and the events of the Ukrainian Revolution, which left a deep impression on him. He returned to his parish in Tres Capones in early 1924 as a priest of the newly created Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC) and placed his parish and others that followed under the jurisdiction of

Metropolitan Ioan Teodorovych in the United States. This move was not resisted by Izraztsov, who appears to have respected the decision.[341]

As the number of Ukrainian immigrants of Orthodox background in Argentina and Paraguay grew, Reverend Hnatiuk was able to create new parishes beyond Tres Capones. In early 1925 he crossed over the border from Argentina into Paraguay and celebrated the liturgy with 50 Ukrainian families near the Paraguayan town of Encarnación (Department of Itapúa), many of them Volynians, but also some Galicians and UNR veterans. Thereafter, as the Ukrainian community enlarged in Paraguay, Hnatiuk founded several more missions within the department of Itapúa on the border with Misiones.[342] Outside of Misiones, in Argentina, he founded further missions in the regions of Santiago del Estero, Chaco, and Formosa.[343]

In Buenos Aires the development of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church did not attain a formal character until the arrival of the post-World War II wave of Ukrainian immigrants. Until then a small number of Orthodox immigrants met privately in their homes or in community halls from 1924 and had the holy liturgy celebrated by Reverend Mykola Cherniavsky, a refugee from Podillia, formerly in the Russian empire, whose brutal beating at the hands of the Cheka (a forerunner of the KGB) during the Revolution had left him with no teeth and a nervous disposition.[344] But efforts to establish a permanent parish met with limited success until after World War II.

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[341] Ibid., 152-153.

[342] Ibid., 156.

[343] Ibid., 169; B[orys] A[riichuk], "U 8-mu richnytsiu smerty ieromonakha Tykhona Hnatiuka," *Dzvin* no.3 (1951): 6.

It is beyond dispute that, until his death in 1943, the indefatigable Hnatiuk alone promoted the cause of the UAOC and Ukrainian culture (he conducted popular cultural-educational work in a number of his missions alongside his religious activities) among Orthodox Ukrainian settlers in the northern Argentine regions as well as in Paraguay (an attempt by Metropolitan Teodorovych in 1930 to assist Hnatiuk with three more priests was shortlived).[345] Less clear is how tenacious his influence was in the far-flung communities and to what extent it survived the death of the lone UAOC missionary priest. Without a single priest in 1943-1946, the UAOC revived its activities after World War II and by 1952 counted seven priests, including three who defected from the Russian Orthodox Church.[346] The early 1950s appear to have been its peak and thereafter a chronic shortage of priests signalled its decline.[347]

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[344] Tetiana Tsymbal, *Spohady*, 25 and 30.

[345] B. Ariichuk, "Ukrainska Avtokefalna Pravoslavna Tserkva v Argentyni," in *Kalendar Ridna Nyva 1959*, 152. An issue that remains to explored is the relationship of Argentine Orthodox Ukrainians with the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church (particularly with regards to whether any missionary priests had been sent to Argentina), to which Volynian and Polissian Ukrainians belonged in Western Ukraine. Ties did exist, for example, between this Church and Ukrainian Orthodox in Canada. See Oleh Gerus, "The Reverend Semen Sawchuk and the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada," *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 16, nos. 1-2 (Summer-Winter 1991): 69.

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[346] Ibid., 152.

[347] The lack of priests, especially outside of Buenos Aires, appears to have persisted through the 1980s. In 1989 Ukrainian Orthodox in Chaco issued an appeal for priests to serve three churches whose doors tended to remain closed throughout much of the year (see *Dzvin* no.1 (1990):15). Their wish was eventually granted. In 1991 the UAOC organ, *Dzvin*, announced (no.3, 1991, 5-6) that a priest had been found to serve the faithful in Chaco and after 15 years of neglect, four parishes were revived. Thus in that year it appears that the UAOC now had a single priest for the entire province of Buenos Aires and another for the province of Chaco. What became of the remaining parishes Hnatiuk had founded elsewhere in Argentina is unknown, but it is almost certain that they passed into the hands of either of the factions of the Russian Orthodox Church with their Patriarchs in Moscow or the USA. In 1988 Archbishop Lazar, Exarch to Central and South America of the Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate), whose base is in Buenos Aires, was quoted as having said during the official Millennium of Christianity celebrations in Kiev, that "nearly all our parishioners in Argentina are Ukrainians." (*News From Ukraine* no.26, 1988, 4.) Ukrainians are also included among the adherents of the Russian Orthodox Church in Exile, whose influence peaked in the 1950s (in 1956 it counted 23 clergy serving five churches in the province of Buenos Aires and ten others in the provinces of Misiones, Rio Negro and Cordoba, and in Paraguay and Uruguay). In November 1991 the Archbishop for Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay of this Church, Rev. Vladimiro de Skalon, wrote me a letter enclosed in which was a copy of an address he delivered at a Synod in Argentina outlining its history in that country. From this address, prepared in late 1990, it can be inferred that the adherents of the Russian Orthodox Church in Exile in Argentina included or includes Ukrainians of all three major waves of immigration. See also Mykhailo Vasylyk, "Ukraintsi v Arhentyni," in Athanas M. Milanytch, et al., eds., *Ukrainski poselennia. Dovidnyk* (New York: The Ukrainian Center for Social Research, 1980), 287.

## Ukrainian Evangelical-Baptist Church

The other Church to assume a Ukrainian character, the Ukrainian Evangelical-Baptist, did not crystalize as a separate entity till 1955, when the Ukrainian Federation of Evangelical Christians and Baptists was created in Buenos Aires. The foundations of this Church, however, were laid long before in Misiones. Ukrainian protestants from Volyn began arriving in Misiones in 1925 and they settled in compact communities near the town of Obera.[348] Their main centre was the colonia of Llapellu.

At first the Ukrainian Evangelical-Baptists worked together with German Baptists in the colonia Picada Sueca, which adjoins Llapellu,[349] but from 1938 began to worship separately among their own growing community. By 1951, the only year for which reliable statistics are available, the Ukrainian Evangelical-Baptist faith had 305 members in Misiones, most of whom were of Volynian background but some of Polissian and Galician, too.[350] The Misiones Ukrainian Evangelical-Baptists were eventually drawn into a pro-Russian

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[348] Mykola Soltys, Ukrainskyi Ievanhelyzm v pralisakh Misionesu (Winnipeg-Chicago: Doroha pravda, 1972), 29-30.

[349] Ibid., 25.

[350] Ibid., 84-85. The breakdown of membership by district is as follows: Llapellu -- 77, Los Helechos -- 84, Obera -- 33, Gobernador Lopez -- 45, Campo Roca -- 33, Florentino Amegino -- 33, and the remainder in three branches in Flor de Julio, Posadas, and Campo Viera.

Pan-Slavic union with other faithful in Buenos Aires and Paraguay. After a split in this Pan-Slavic protestant movement, the Ukrainians who went their separate way in 1955 had, by the late 1970s, three major centres with branches. One in the Buenos Aires suburb of San Andrés, with its own building and resident pastor and the administrative headquarters of the Ukrainian Federation of Evangelical Christians and Baptists, another in the town of Obera, home of the Ukrainian Biblical Institute, and Posadas, which also had its own building and resident pastor.[351]

The three major church denominations with a strictly Ukrainian character thus sprang from sources in the same region -- Misiones. All three today, however, have their headquarters in the province of Buenos Aires, where in the interwar period their influence was slighter.

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[351] Vasylyk, *Ukrainski poselennia v Argentini*, 67.

## The Church and community associations

The work of the Ukrainian Churches was not restricted to catechism and spiritual care. Priests also initiated non-religious community organizations. The founding of the first Ukrainian organization anywhere in Argentina has been credited to the priest Iaroslav Karpiak, who arrived in Misiones directly from Ukraine in April 1909.[352] He initiated a reading club in the settlement of Apostoles on 19 September 1910 with 63 members, calling it after the esteemed early nineteenth century Galician priest-poet, Markiian Shashkevych.[353] The far-flung farmsteads and torrential rains often made attendance at the reading club difficult, according to Karpiak.[354] Although he returned to Ukraine early the following year, the reading club appears to have survived for several more years.[355]

The Markiian Shashkevych reading club, however, may not have been the first secular Ukrainian organization in Argentina. The Brazilian Ukrainian newspaper, *Zoria*, for instance, reported the activities of a "Prosvita" society in Azara, Misiones, already in the middle of 1907, which subscribed to this newspaper. But the subsequent Orthodox-Catholic rift in the Azara-Tres Capones communities led to its gradual dissolution.[356]

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[352] Ibid., 49.

[353] *Svoboda,* 1 December 1910.

[354] *Dilo,* 31 October 1910.

[355] Vasylyk, *Ukrainski poselennia v Argentini*, 69.

Another cultural organization was founded in Azara in 1912 by the priest Emiliian Ananevych, named "Ukraina."[357] In Apostoles, Karpiak's replacement, Reverend Ivan Senyshyn, founded the district's first cooperative, the so-called "Agricola Ucraniana," in 1922.[358]

### Metropolitan Sheptytsky, Petro Karmansky, and the first settlers in Misiones

The Ukrainian communities in Misiones were host to two distinguished guests in 1922: the Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Andrei Sheptytsky, on a fact-finding mission, and Petro Karmansky, a delegate of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic's government-in-exile on a fund-raising tour of South America. Both visits had the effect of binding the communities more closely with old country affairs.

Metropolitan Sheptytsky arrived in Apostoles from Brazil on 12 June 1922 and in the course of the next two weeks visited the colonies of Apostoles, Azara, Las Tunas, and Tres Capones, performing religious services, raising the morale of settlers, and collecting funds for orphans in Galicia. On 27 June he left Apostoles for Buenos Aires, and from there to Rome.[359]

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[356] *Ukrainske slovo,* 21 January 1973.

[357] Kovalyk, *Vasyliiany v Argentyni,* 37.

[358] Bernardo Allassia, *Apostoles: Su historia* (Apostoles: no publisher, 1974), 125.

Three months later, on 21 September, Petro Karmansky arrived in Misiones. He, too, visited the *colonias* and later published in brief his impressions. As a delegate of the government-in-exile of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic, Karmansky was interested in such matters as the level of national consciousness among the immigrants in Argentina. He was both impressed and disappointed with what he witnessed in Misiones. He was impressed, for instance, with what he sensed to be a higher level of self-confidence among the Ukrainian settlers in Misiones, especially the women, compared to Ukrainians in the old country.[360] He was less impressed with the tendency of some Ukrainians, however, to act as "raw ethnic material" for the Poles and Russians. Karmansky calculated some 800 or so Ukrainian families (7,000-8,000 individuals) in the settlements of Apostoles and Las Tunas (400), Azara-Tres Capones (150), Bompland (200), San José (40), and Cerro Cora (40),[361] figures which were probably based on the aforementioned Basilian fathers' census of 1913 (see Chapter

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[359] Kovalyk, *Vasyliiany v Argentyni*, 41-42.

[360] Petro Karmansky, *Mizh ridnymy v Pivdennii Amerytsi* (Kyiv-Vienna-Lviv: Chaika, 1923), 154.

[361] Ibid., 168.

Two). He noted that in Azara Poles were more numerous than the 75 Ukrainian families in this locality, but, in his view, these were not real Poles at all; rather, they were Roman Catholic Ukrainians.[362] "All the Ukrainians [in Misiones] of the Roman Catholic faith," he complained, "and even scores of Greek Catholic families designate themselves as Poles. They show off their Polish patriotism at every opportunity and to them it matters little that they know not a single word of Polish."[363] He was reassured, however, by the fact that at least there were seven (Greek Catholic) Ukrainian churches and chapels in the settlements, a cooperative, reading club, and school in Apostoles, and a Prosvita reading club and school with 31 pupils in Azara.[364] Before Karmansky returned to Brazil on 10 October, he had collected some 300 American dollars (1,000 Argentine pesos) for the cause of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic, which had evacuated Galicia in 1919 after Poland had overrun it, but continued its struggle abroad with a government-in-exile until 1923.[365]

The visits by the two dignitaries cannot be divorced from the ongoing Ukrainian-Polish struggle. Karmansky's purpose in Misiones was explicitly political in nature and was intended to reorient the Ukrainian community in Misiones to the cause of ending Polish rule in Western Ukraine. His perception of national consciousness among the settlers in Misiones was framed partly from the perspective of the extent of Polish influence in the community. Any degree of assimilation to Polish nationality in the community would, in his view, weaken the commitment abroad to an independent homeland while strengthening Poland's position in Western Ukraine. The primary role of organizations in the settlements was considered by him as a vehicle through which the balance of Ukrainian-Polish influence could be decidedly shifted in the Ukrainian camp's favour.

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[362] Ibid., 154.

[363] Ibid., 157.

[364] Ibid., 154 and 169.

[365] Ibid., 168.

A similar interpretation can be proffered with regards to Metropolitan Sheptytsky's visit to Misiones. Those who have written of his mission to Argentina have emphasized that his presence in Misiones did much to raise the morale of the settlers there, akin to a shepherd reassuring his flock that they had not been abandoned. There is no literature at hand that would suggest a dissenting opinion to this characterization, and there is no reason to believe that the settlers were not encouraged and even inspired by the visit of such a preeminent figure whose stature was well known to Galicians both in Ukraine and abroad. But it would be unwise to conclude that the motive of the Metropolitan's visit was restricted singularly to providing moral support to the settlers. The transfer of Galicia from Austrian rule directly to Polish necessitated a new role for the Greek Catholic Church under a regime considered to be less responsive to Ukrainian needs than the previous one. Thus, Metropolitan Sheptytsky's visit to Misiones can be said to be correlated with the need to strengthen the position of the Greek Catholic Church at home by ensuring its survival abroad as well, and with the wider ongoing Ukrainian-Polish contest. The link of the visit to this bilateral contest was disclosed by one writer, who judged that:

> **The visit of the Metropolitan to Argentina lifted the spirits of the Ukrainian [settlers], whose circumstances had been very unenviable. Chief among their problems had been the threat posed to their nationality by Polish priests, endeavouring to drag them to their side. The Church alone stood to defend the nationality of the settlers, but a single [Greek Catholic] priest for all Argentina is hardly sufficient.**[366]

A further illustration of the extent to which Metropolitan Sheptytsky's visit bore the essence of Ukraine's war of independence, is his performance of a Requiem in Apostoles "for the fallen victims of Ukraine's war of freedom."[367] There is little doubt that both Metropolitan Sheptytsky's and Petro Karmansky's visits to Misiones enlivened interest in old country affairs, one which was sustained by the periodic ingression of priests into the region directly from Western Ukraine and by contacts with organizations, especially the Prosvita society, in Buenos Aires throughout the interwar period. This interest, however, did not touch all the settlers with the same degree of enthusiasm.[368]

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[366] P. Khomyn, "Mytropolyt Andrii Sheptytsky iak Apostolskyi Visytator dlia Ukraintsiv v Poludnevii Amerytsi," *Bohosloviia* 4, nos. 1/2 (1926): 213.

[367] Ibid.

## Ukrainians in Buenos Aires

In Buenos Aires, the Russian Orthodox Church maintained a school and a library in the church building's basement.[369] The only concrete evidence of Ukrainians organizing separately is provided by Pylyp Bak, an immigrant from Eastern Ukraine who arrived in Argentina in October 1909. Bak, a student of Spanish, had been active in the cultural and political newspaper, *Rada*, in Kyiv, which promoted Ukrainian national consciousness in the midst of periodic Tsarist persecution. After his arrival in Argentina, he worked in Dock Sud, harvested grapes in Rosario, and then engaged in construction of the new port of Belgrano in Buenos Aires. There he found himself among compatriots, as well as other eastern Europeans -- Russians, Belarusians, Czechs, Poles, "and a gypsy from the Kyiv region."[370]

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[368] Complaints by community activists of settler indifference to their efforts to initiate secular organizations in Misiones were frequent, and the fault lay not so much with Polish competition in the region in the interwar period, than with some settlers' eagerness to embrace Argentine cultural norms. One such activist in 1931, for instance, denounced the widespread practice by first-generation immigrant parents of Hispanicizing the first names of their offspring (see V. M-K., "Zahroza vynarodovliennia," in *Ukrainskyi kaliendar-almanakh na 1932 rik* (Buenos Aires: La Fogata, 1931), 34). Greek Catholic priests experienced more success in initiating parishes among the settlers in the interwar period than lay activists in developing branches of secular organizations, and in some instances the opening of a branch of Prosvita in Misiones owed its origins to a priest's initiative than to the efforts of a layman. It is thus conceivable that the first Misiones settlers tended to shy away from activities they construed as projecting political connotations, but were willing to accept the tutelage of the Church as a more neutral (and familiar) entity.

[369] V. Korolov, *Ukraintsi v Amerytsi* (Kyiv: Drukarnia 1-oi Kyivsk. drukarsk. spilky, 1909), 102.

One of the Ukrainian construction labourers in Belgrano, a middle-aged man, approached Bak to educate his son. He agreed and soon gathered around him some 30 pupils, children and adults, for evening classes.[371] Within two months many more flocked to his school. So many, in fact, that he found it difficult to teach a motley group of students whose knowledge of Ukrainian was uneven, since some, as was typical in the more Russified districts (and this applied particularly to the urban centres) of Eastern Ukraine, spoke a jargon which was pronouncedly Russian in content. To cope with this problem, he decided to reduce his class size by imposing exams: those who still failed to speak Ukrainian well after two months of classes and continued to use a Russian-Ukrainian hybrid (*iazychiie*), were dissuaded from returning. By May 1910 Bak was able to build a library for his students, which included songs published by Ievhen Chykalenko, the editor of *Rada*, the works of Volodymyr Vynnychenko, Mykhailo Hrushevsky (both of whom would later be leaders of the UNR), and Vasyl Koroliv, and the leading newspapers from both Western Ukraine (under Austrian rule) and Eastern Ukraine.[372] But towards the end of 1910, his students had to leave Buenos Aires to engage in seasonal work across the country and the school terminated. His students now gone, Bak decided to join, with another fellow Ukrainian teacher, Oleksii Lutsenko, the Cultural-Enlightenment Association of Russian Immigrants and hoped to foster autonomous Ukrainian activities within this organization. His efforts to found a Ukrainian library in the organization's premises, however, were thwarted. Although the head of the organization, the Russian priest, Shalaev, approved of the idea, objections came from among the multi-ethnic members.[373] In April 1911 he left for Brazil where he worked as a meteorological inspector in the state of Paraná. There, with Valentyn Kuts, another refugee from Tsarist persecution, he helped develop Ukrainian community schools in the immigrant settlements.[374]

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[370] *Nash Klych,* 5 April 1956.

[371] Ibid.

Thus ended the first attempt to found a separate organization among the Ukrainian settlers in Buenos Aires. Vasyl Koroliv, a former colleague of Bak's at *Rada*, can be considered correct in his study of Ukrainians in the Americas (written in 1908), when he asserts that the status of organizational life among Ukrainians in Argentina "is worse than what it is for Ukrainians in Brazil."[375]

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[372] Ibid.

[373] Ibid.

[374] On Bak's years in Brazil, see Zinko, *Ridna shkola u Brazylii*, 201-204.

### Ukrainian anarchists

The Ukrainian settlers in the province of Buenos Aires tended to join "all-Russian" organizations of a multiethnic character. Some Ukrainian immigrants, including exiled sailors of the battleship Potemkin, may have joined the social-democratic organization, Avangard, founded in Buenos Aires in 1910, or the Russian Social-Democratic Workers Party Solidarity Group founded a year later.[376] What is more certain is that Ukrainians in the Buenos Aires region were active in the "all-Russian" anarchist movement which was led by a Ukrainian, Nykyfor Avvakumovych Cholovsky, a distant relative of a later leader of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev.[377] There is no known published history of the Federation of Russian Workers' Organizations in South America (FRWOSA) he led, but from individual issues of the periodical

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[375] Korolov, *Ukraintsi v Amerytsi*, 102.

[376] Anatoli Chernenko and Alexei Shliajov, "Participantes de la Primera Revolucion Rusa en Argentina," *America Latina* 37/38, nos.1/2 (1981): 280-281.

[377] Ihor Kachurovsky, "My - v Arhentini," *Vsesvit* no. 3 (1991): 218.

Cholovsky edited from 1932, *Seiatel*, it can be inferred that the Federation grew out of a number of existing organizations which sprang up spontaneously. Among the earliest such organizations was the one founded by Vasyl Domanytsky, a native of the Kyiv region, who with several Potemkin sailors, fled to Argentina via London.[378] Domanytsky, the son of a priest, founded a cultural organization called *Iunatstvo* (Youth) in the Buenos Aires suburb of Llavallol in 1908.[379] Two years later the organization had developed a sizable library and an amateur drama troupe.[380] Domanytsky had already been renowned for his pioneering community work in Ukraine before his exile in Argentina. A student of a founding father of history in Ukraine, Volodymyr Antonovych, Domanytsky wrote several important works on history (particularly Cossack), archeology, and literary criticism. Among his numerous publishing achievements, he is credited as the editor of the first complete edition of *Kobzar* (1907), the collected poems of Ukraine's bard, Taras Shevchenko. He was also one of the pioneers of the consumers' cooperative movement in the Kyiv region. His civic and cultural work elicited the displeasure of the Tsarist regime and brought him a stiff sentence of forced exile to the distant and frigid Russian north; this sentence was later commuted to three years of exile abroad, during which he continued his cultural work among Ukrainians in Argentina. It is not clear how long he spent in Argentina, but his length of stay does not appear to have been more than two years, for one source reports that he died in Arcachon, France, in September 1910.[381]

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[378] *Seiatel* no.113 (January 1966): 4.

[379] *Seiatel* no.100 (June 1961): 8.

[380] Ibid., 8, and *Seiatel* no.122 (July 1968): 1.

In the city centre of Buenos Aires, too, sporadic cultural activity can be traced back to 1914, when immigrants Dmytro Poleshchuk and Feliks Motus, owners of the downtown "Odessa" restaurant on calle Viamonte, encouraged theatrical plays on its premises. Part of the proceeds of the performances were used to buy books for the library in Llavallol, where Ukrainians worked in the local beer brewery.[382] A similar amateur theatrical troupe at the Self-Reliance Association operated in the district of Talleres (today Remedios de Escalada) and was directed by A. Diachenko.[383] The proceeds of this troupe's performances were used to fund the Association's pedagogical activities.

These organizations appear to have provided the foundations of the Federation of Russian Workers' Organizations in South America, described by one writer as a supranational, anarcho-syndicalist organization, embracing "Ukrainians, Belarusians, Russians, and Jews,"[384] but for which no founding date is given. This organization, which at its apogee is said to have embraced 15,000 members in Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil, was suppressed by the new Uriburu military regime, along with all other anarchist organizations, in 1930.[385]

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[381] *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, Vol. I, 717. Cholovsky, on the other hand, fixed the place and year of his death as Italy, 1911 (*Seiatel* no.100 (June 1961): 12).

[382] *Seiatel* no.122 (July 1968): 1.

[383] Ibid. It would be pertinent here to note that at least one source credits the change of name of the Talleres railway station to Remedios de Escalada, near Lanus, to a violent railway strike, which included many Ukrainian workers in 1926. See Kachurovsky, "My -- v Arhentini," 213.

Political tension had been intensifying in Argentina in the course of the first quarter of the twentieth century. In 1916, in response to mounting public pressure, the ruling elite reluctantly passed over power to Hipólito Yrigoyen, the leader of the democratic Unión Cívica Radical, who portrayed himself as the champion of democratic and labour rights. Under his presidency and that of his colleague, Marcelo T. de Alvera (1922-1928), groups such as the FRWOSA operated in a climate that allowed for their development. Consequently, the Argentine right, composed of an alliance of large landowning families, major exporters, big bankers, members of the old elite, and the affluent middle class, mobilized resistance to what it perceived as ties between democracy and leftism. This resistance intensified after Yrigoyen's reelection in 1928, and his inability (he was now in his seventies and showing signs of aging) to cope with political chaos, especially at the outset of the Great Depression, provided the impetus for the military coup that ousted him in 1930 and the repression of leftist entities that ensued.[386]

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[384] Kachurovsky, "My -- v Arhentini," 218.

[385] *Seiatel* no.113 (January 1966): 4.

Before its demise, the FRWOSA had initiated cooperatives, Russian language evening classes, libraries, amateur drama troupes, and choirs.[387] Russian was considered the *lingua franca* for the organization's multi-ethnic members: because, however, a disproportionate number were Ukrainian, the issue of a more elevated place for the Ukrainian language in the various forums of the organization was debated, especially just shortly before its ban.[388]

The FRWOSA maintained firm contacts with like-minded organizations abroad. Such links were abetted in part by the fact that Ukrainian anarchists had relatives who, like themselves, had emigrated abroad; some settled previously in another country before reemigrating to Argentina. The FRWOSA's organ, *Golos truda*, occasionally featured announcements by immigrants in other countries searching for relatives in

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[386] For a discussion of this process, see Sandra McGee Deutsch, "The Right under Radicalism, 1916-1930," in Sandra McGee Deutsch and Ronald H. Dolkart, eds., *The Argentine Right: Its History and Intellectual Origins, 1910 to the Present* (Washington: Scholarly Resources Inc, 1993), 35-64.

[387] Ibid.

[388] See *Golos truda,* 1 April 1929.

Argentina.[389] Cholovsky's wife, Feodora Petrovna Babenko, also a native of the Kyiv region, was among those immigrant families who settled first in the United States before relocating to Argentina.[390]

It is not clear what effect the anarchist Makhnovite movement in Ukraine of 1917-1921 had on anarchists in Argentina, but certainly there is evidence that Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina and Uruguay expressed their support of Nestor Makhno in his refuge in Paris with generous financial contributions.[391] Cholovsky himself, judging from a later eloquent defence of Makhno and his movement, appears to have been a staunch sympathizer throughout.[392]

The influence of anarchism, both in the Ukrainian community and in Argentina generally, waned after 1930. Cholovsky, otherwise employed as a taxi driver and tailor, henceforth concentrated on cultural activities and, from 1932, in publishing the independent and less militant Russian-language periodical, *Seiatel*. He assisted in a number of publishing ventures of Ukrainian classical literary works and his developed range of contacts in Argentina proved useful for even post-World War II Ukrainian immigrants to tap.[393]

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[389] See, for instance, *Golos truda*, 8 February 1929.

[390] *Seiatel* no.122 (July 1968): 1.

[391] See for example the financial report of the periodical *Anarkhiia* in its nos. 2-3, June-July 1930 issue.

[392] For Cholovsky's interesting defence of the Makhno movement, see *Seiatel* no.126 (July 1969): 12-15.

## Conclusion

On completing the discussion of pre-World War I Ukrainian organizations it would bear concluding here that scholar Yarema Kelebay's Hartzian approach to the study of Montreal's Ukrainians can be tentatively applied to interpreting the organizational history of Argentina's Ukrainian community. The basis of Kelebay's modification of Louis Hartz's model is the latter's examination of European colonial societies from the perspective of their point of departure from Europe. Hartz, Kelebay observes, referred to new colonial societies founded abroad as "*fragments* thrown off from Europe,"[394] and the ideological baggage the settlers brought with them in turn represented fragments of a wide ideological spectrum that in the New World remain frozen.[395]

In adapting the Hartzian model to his study of three waves of Ukrainian immigrants in Montreal, Kelebay writes that: "Each fragment is characterized by different intellectual issues around which community life centred at specific periods of time and by distinctive organizations formed by each fragment after its arrival in Montreal."[396] In a more recent article, in which the analysis is broadened to include Quebec in general, Kelebay acknowledges that by "applying this [Hartzian] approach, one runs the risk both of overgeneralization and oversimplification," but nonetheless defends his methodology because it "map[s] out the central ideas in the *mentality* of each of the three fragments" that corresponded to the three separate waves of immigration into Quebec.[397]

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[393] Kachurovsky, "My -- v Arhentini," 218-219.

[394] Cited in Yarema Kelebay, "Three Fragments of the Ukrainian Community in Montreal, 1899-1970: A Hartzian Approach," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* XII, no.2 (1980): 74-75.

[395] Ibid., 75.

From the perspective of defining the cultural baggage or mentality of the immigrants at their point of departure from their place of origin, Kelebay's approach is useful for explaining the pre-World War I Ukrainian organizations. Simply put, the immigrants transferred to their new surroundings the forms of organizations and institutions to which they were accustomed. The Galician immigrants in Misiones tended to develop their organized life around the church, as many did in the "old country." As one scholar has said in reference to Ukrainian immigrants in the United States, the church had been the "central sociocultural" institution in their former villages where familial, social, and cultural activities revolved around the presence of the church.[398] In the United States, just as in Argentina, the immigrants did have the option of attending the less familiar Polish Roman Catholic churches. But it was only natural that they would prefer Ukrainian-speaking priests from their own districts who imparted the dual function of spiritual counselling and reinforcing the immigrants' distinct identity, thereby providing them with a stronger sense of community. The corporate role of the church in this regard has been recognized by the American political scientist Crawford Young, who affirmed that, "In the United States, one of the determinants of ethnicity is the availability of an ethnic church, paticularly if it maintains ...a focal point for the ethnic community."[399] From the earlier discussion of the church in this chapter, it is quite evident that the Ukrainian priests in Misiones contributed immensely to the cohesion of the Ukrainian community in this region, and that the church was the institution to which the settlers became most bound. The eastern Ukrainian immigrants, for their part, arrived in Argentina when anarchist influences in the urban centres of

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[396] Ibid., 74.

[397] Yarema Gregory Kelebay, "Three Solitudes: A History of Ukrainians in Quebec 1910-1960," in Alexander Biega and Myroslaw Diakowsky, eds., *The Ukrainian Experience in Quebec* (Toronto: The Basilian Press, 1994), 2.

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[398] Vasyl Markus, "The Ancestral Faith Transplanted: A Century of Ukrainian Religious Experience in the United States," in Paul R. Magocsi, ed., *The Ukrainian Experience in the United States: A Symposium* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, Harvard University, 1979), 106.

[399] Crawford Young, *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1976), 53.

Ukraine were strong.[400] And although these influences were quite pronounced in Argentina, too, it is clear that these Ukrainian immigrants drew their inspiration for anarchist ideology from sources in Eastern Ukraine rather than abroad: pro-anarchist sentiments were also dominant among eastern Ukrainian immigrants in the United States.[401] Argentina's eastern Ukrainian immigrants of the pre-1914 period also emigrated when Ukraine did not exist as a political entity; their compatriots in the Russian Empire who stressed Ukrainian distinctiveness often fled to Galicia in the more liberal Austrian Empire to escape persecution. Therefore, the Russian Empire and all-Russian forms of organization were generally all the eastern Ukrainian immigrants knew. The organizations and institutions they joined or founded in Argentina, with notable exceptions, reflected the supranational character of organizations in the Russian Empire.

But while Kelebay's methodology is valid for defining the context for the original sources of the immigrants' cultural and ideological orientation, it has etiological limitations for identifying the evolutionary patterns of their organizations abroad. The immigrants represented a majority of the population in the regions they came from, but a minority in the countries they settled. Societal structures in both places were not identical, and the character and course of immigrant organizations often developed in response to conditions in the adopted country. The "frozen fragment" theory thus does not explain why a schism could occur in Misiones, for instance, which reflected more conditions in the New World than those in Europe. A more practical framework is sociologist Wsevolod Isajiw's bilateral division of exogeneous and endogeneous forces, in which factors emanating from the experience in the immigrants' place of origin are balanced or discussed in relation to circumstances in the adopted country to explain organizational differentiation in the immigrant community.[402]

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[400] See the entry titled "Anarchists" in *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* Vol.I, 65.

[401] Jaroslaw Czechut, the author of an excellent and detailed study of Ukrainian anarchists in the United States, writes in his unpublished paper (*The Anarchist Movement in Detroit*, n.p., c. 1970, 8) that in the city of Detroit, for instance, "the members of the anarchist movement were predominantly Belorussians and Ukrainians [from the Russian Empire]."

Whether they emigrated to Canada, Argentina, or even Siberia at the turn of the twentieth century, the national consciousness of the Ukrainian emigrants tended to be low. Crawford Young has said of the Ukrainian community in the United States, that: "An interesting reflection of the lateness of the diffusion of Ukrainian nationalism lies in the near-total absence of strongly asserted ethnic community among the early waves of Ukrainian immigrants in the United States."[403] The same statement could apply equally well to the first wave of Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina. Ryszard Stemplowski in his study of Ukrainians and Poles in Misiones before 1938 concluded that the national consciousness of the former was lower than that of latter,[404] a thesis which Petro Karmansky, in the preceding discussion of his visit to Misiones in 1922, supported.

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[402] Wsevolod W. Isajiw, "Organizational Differentiation and Persistence of the Ethnic Community: Ukrainians in the United States," in Paul R. Magocsi, ed., *The Ukrainian Experience in the United States: A Symposium* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, Harvard University, 1979), 80-81.

This "near-total absence of strongly asserted ethnic community" among Ukrainians in Argentina, and the relatively scattered nature of their settlement, were manifested in different ways. The low level of national consciousness among the immigrants in the Buenos Aires area would explain, for instance, why there is no mention in any source of a delegation of an Argentine Ukrainian organization turning out to greet such distinguished Ukrainian cultural representatives as Galician opera soprano Solomiia Krushelnytska, who sojourned in Buenos Aires at various times in 1906-1911, 1913, and 1923[405] and the predominantly eastern Ukrainian, pro-UNR Koshetz or Ukrainian National choir in their Buenos Aires visit of 1923 during their South American tour of the early 1920s.

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[403] Crawford Young, *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism*, 26.

[404] Stemplowski, "Los eslavos en Misiones," 390.

The Argentine mainstream, for their part, appears to have been incognizant of the Ukrainian immigrants' separate nationality. On the 25th anniversary of the founding of Apostoles in Misiones, the influential Argentine daily, *La Nación*, in its report of the occasion in 1922, referred only to a Polish community celebrating this event.[406] The same newspaper, and in the same month and year, however, showed that it was aware that Ukraine existed as a political concept. Reporting on the efforts of one D.Y.P. Rastorgoneff to gain support for recognition of Ukrainian sovereignty at the International Law Association of the League of Nations, the newspaper, in the course of its interview with Rastorgoneff, commented, among other things, that he expressed his gratitude to the Argentine government for having endorsed Ukrainian independence. But neither he nor *La Nación* made any mention of a local Ukrainian community.

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[405] *Nash klych*, 28 September 1978 and 5 October 1978. Reprint of an article on Solomiia Krushelnytska which originally appeared in the daily, *La Prensa*. It was in Argentina where Solomiia Krushelnytska married her Italian husband, Cesar Riccione, on 19 July 1910.

[406] *La Nación*, 31 August 1922.

A more "asserted" ethnic Ukrainian community began to take shape after new organizations emerged in Buenos Aires in the mid 1920s. When Ukrainian Galician pianist, Liubka Kolessa, a graduate of the Vienna Academy of Music, performed in Buenos Aires in May 1938 as an Austrian (she was billed as a pianist of this nationality), for example, a delegation of two local, pro-independence Ukrainian organizations founded in the interwar period met with her to express their disapproval that she did not entertain as a Ukrainian.[407] The subject of such Ukrainian organizations in the interwar period is the focus of the proceeding chapter.

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[407] Tsymbal, *Spohady*, 27. Kolessa defended herself before the delegation by declaring that it was the press and not she who was responsible for the misrepresentation of her nationality; such misinformation was disseminated in Argentina without her knowledge, she said, even before she set foot in Argentina. See M. Danylyshyn, "Ambasadory mystetstva," in *Kalendar 'Prosvity' na rik 1983* (Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1983), 79.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## UKRAINIAN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS: INTERWAR PERIOD

Although this chapter details the organizational efforts of the immigrants who arrived in 1920-1939, and examines the evolution and character that the interwar organizations assumed, it also initially ties the two waves of Ukrainian immigration together by illustrating the relationship of these new organizations with the existing community. As this exercise is undertaken, a chronological and narrative approach is foremost adopted: a more interpretative analysis is presented in the conclusion, where the role of the organizations in the community is assessed in the context of other issues germane to the interwar Ukrainian immigration experience.

It was in the La Plata suburb of Berisso, some 56 kilometres from the city of Buenos Aires, that the first strictly Ukrainian secular organization was founded in the interwar period in Argentina, beyond Misiones. It was in this suburb, too, that discordant "fragments," one could say, brushed against each other. Ivan Kryvy, a prolific community activist in the interwar period and a founder of a militant organization, recalled in 1932 that after the organization, *Moloda hromada*, the predecessor to the first Prosvita society in the province of Buenos Aires, was founded in Berisso in

1924, it faced resistance from the local branch of the FRWOSA, "formed mainly by eastern Ukrainians already there before World War I."[408] The irony here is that among the principal founders of *Moloda hromada* itself were a number of eastern Ukrainians, the difference being that the latter were veterans of an unsuccessful struggle for independence. A muted, but persistent animosity existed between the two groups of immigrants, according to Kryvy.[409]

### Moloda hromada/Prosvita in Berisso

Tetiana Tsymbal was one of those eastern Ukrainian founders of the *Moloda hromada* in Berisso. Tsymbal had joined an UNR partisan detachment led by her husband, Ivan Ukhiv, in the region of Podillia during the Ukrainian Revolution. Hounded by the Cheka, the two crossed illegally into Romania in 1920 whence they emigrated to Argentina. Work could be found in the *frigorificos* of Berisso and the Swift company hired Tsymbal but not her husband, who was left lame in one leg during the Revolution. Conditions in Berisso, as Tsymbal describes them, would not appear to provide the most favourable foundations for an active community organization. The hours at work, canning meat, were long and tedious -- 10 hours daily (weekends excepting), spread between 5.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. with short breaks. There was no escaping the workplace at night either. The bleating of cattle being led to slaughter and periodic alarms calling on different shifts in this medium-sized town with a single paved street interfered with efforts at slumber.[410] The impression thus given is a work force too tired to do anything on the weekends except recuperate for the week that lay ahead.

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[408] Ivan Kryvy, "Pershi ukrainski organizatsii v Argentyni," in *Ukrainsky kaliendar na 1933 rik pid redaktsiieiu T. Khomyshyna* (Buenos Aires: La Fogata, 1932), 51. Ukrainian anarchists and pro-Prosvita immigrants also encountered each other in the district of Las Breñas in Chaco in a similar fashion. See *Ukrainske slovo*, 23 June 1929.

[409] Ibid., 51.

But Tsymbal did not work in isolation. There were several thousand other employees who laboured alongside her (in any of the many blocks in the Swift complex), and among them a good number of compatriots. Few of these compatriots, however, had the same level of national consciousness as she did and tended to express their identity in terms of a *patria chica*: Pre-World War I Ukrainian immigrants from Kyiv would say they were from the Kyiv region rather than Ukraine, an immigrant from Transcarpathia would refer to himself as a Carpatho-Rusyn, etc.[411]

Yet it was not difficult to seek out the nationally conscious among 3,000 Ukrainian immigrants in the town by that time. Within months of her arrival in Berisso, Tsymbal and her husband were in the company of several like-minded veterans of the Ukrainian Revolution and in the autumn of 1923 they, with about nine others, met to discuss the possibility of founding a cultural association. A significant proportion of the participants at this meeting were eastern Ukrainians. On 10 February 1924 eight individuals formed the drama troupe, *Moloda hromada*.[412] At a special meeting of 31 August 1924, the name *Moloda hromada* was dropped in favour of "Prosvita," because it was discovered that there already existed a pro-Communist organization in the United States bearing the former name, with which the Berisso activists, many of them fugitives from the Bolsheviks, did not wish to be confused or associated.[413] By the time this meeting concluded, the organization now called Prosvita had grown to comprise 54 registered members.[414] Despite the redesignation, the dramatic arts continued to constitute the major activity of the organization. Tsymbal was one of those involved in the staging of plays. Their purpose, she recalls, was to reach out to as many people as possible and also to raise money for future Prosvita activities.[415]

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[410] Ibid., 20-21.

[411] Ibid., 22.

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[412] Ivan Didukh, "U 50-richchia zasnuvannia tovarystva 'Prosvita' v Berisso," in *Kalendar 'Prosvita' na zvychainyi rik 1974* (Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1974), 38.

[413] B. Kalyna, "V 'Prosviti' nasha syla," in *Iuvilei 'Prosvita' v Berisso 1924-1949* (Berisso: Prosvita, c.1949), 8.

[414] Didukh, "U 50-richchia," 39.

[415] Tsymbal, *Spohady*, 23.

This was easier said than done, as the adage goes. The Prosvita enthusiasts had no published plays to work from, so everything had to be handwritten from a single source. Then the next step was costumes and choreography. But these were not insurmountable problems. Much worse was the issue of a place to perform their plays. With no premises of their own, the Prosvita performers used the stage at the local Polish hall. The Berisso Polish community apparently had their own bank and school, in addition to their hall, all funded by the state that now occupied Western Ukraine.[416]

The Prosvita performers in 1924 had no medium of publicizing their plays except through their own, personal enterprise. Posters announcing a programme (the first organized by Prosvita) based on verses by the nineteenth century poet, Stepan Rudansky, a play and a concert, were prepared and pasted on selected walls of the town. They then went door to door, targetting those homes where Ukrainians were known to live, appealing to them to attend. There was no admission fee, they were told, and a dance would follow. A Jewish wedding band was hired, which played outside the hall to entice passersby to attend the show. The whole event was a success, Tsymbal recalls, with people coming in droves.[417]

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[416] Ibid., 23-24.

[417] Ibid., 24.

For the Prosvita activists, who for some time had no newspaper through which to popularize their mission, the dramatic arts were one of the few available means of rallying people together and transmitting national consciousness to a large gathering. Even when they did have access to a newspaper, which alerted readers to the venues and schedules of the plays, the purpose of the drama troupes remained much the same -- to promote Ukrainian culture, provide entertainment, assemble immigrants in one place, and to raise funds for Prosvita activities.

For its second cultural event, the Prosvita members, all of them factory workers, now charged a few centavos for the entertainment. Nevertheless, many still attended, allured by the familiarity of the ambience and not least the dance that ended the evening. The local anarchist association, which operated under the name of the Union of Russian Workers, now patently had competition. The Prosvita members aimed to attract to their fold not only veterans of Ukraine's struggle for independence in 1917-1921, but also those immigrants they considered not nationally conscious -- the pre-World War I immigrants from Eastern Ukraine, for example. Tsymbal seemed to know them reasonably well. The Union of Russian Workers, she says, received direct financial support from the so-called "Prince of anarchism" himself, Peter Kropotkin. These funds assisted in the maintenance of a workers' dining room with subsidized meals, a school, and even a farm.[418] Money for the anarchist cause in Berisso was raised in different ways, including bank robbery. One self-styled Robin Hood who robbed from the rich to give to the workers, was a certain Polishchuk, an immigrant from Bessarabia, whose activities became ingrained in local lore.[419]

Prosvita members may have contributed substantially to the raising of national consciousness among Ukrainians in Berisso, but their activities caused the wrath of some members of the Union of Russian Workers; differences expressed between the two at times led to an exchange of blows on the street. The Prosvita society survived longer than the Union of Russian Workers, though the reasons proffered by Prosvita members to account for the latter's demise are contradictory. Tetiana Tsymbal suggested that once funds stopped reaching them from the Soviet Union and Kropotkin himself was banished to Siberia, the organization underwent a sharp decline.[420] It is an interpretation that has little logic: Kropotkin died in 1921, but the Union of Russian Workers, according to Tsymbal's own account, was still influential by the time of the founding of Prosvita in 1924. Another Prosvita member, Ivan Kryvy, who joined on 9 July 1924, wrote several years later that there was still no consonance between the two groups,[421] attesting to the persistence of the anarchist organization in Berisso. Finally, B. Kalyna, writing on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of Prosvita in Berisso, claims that when Prosvita acquired its own building in 1930, the Union of Russian Workers expired.[422] This implied link appears to be more coincidental than actual: 1930 was also the year the Uriburu regime seized power, and the collapse of the anarchist organization undoubtedly owed more to government repression than to the establishment of a new permanent home for Prosvita in Berisso.[423]

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[418] Ibid., 23.

[419] Ibid.

[420] Ibid., 25.

## The evolution of Prosvita in Berisso

The Berisso Prosvita operated on its own for fully two years, with no branches or links with like-minded organizations elsewhere in Argentina. As advocates of an independent Ukraine, the members could turn to none of the states that occupied their homeland for support. They were aware, however, that the Ukrainians of Brazil had now nearly three decades of organization behind them. Shortly after its founding, Prosvita contacted the Ukrainian Union, a secular organization of a liberal disposition, in Porto Uniao, Paraná, and subscribed to its weekly organ, *Khliborob*. It also began to subscribe to newspapers from Galicia and Volyn, and accumulated miscellaneous books sent from the old country for a library. By July 1928 some 52 works of literature and 42 copies of plays had been deposited with the Prosvita library in Berisso.[424]

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[421] Kryvy, "Pershi ukrainski organizatsii," 51.

[422] B. Kalyna, "V 'Prosviti' nasha syla," in *Iuvilei 'Prosvity' v Berisso 1924-1949*, 6.

[423] The actual extent of the influence of Prosvita among Berisso's Ukrainian community can be gleaned from the statement of one activist, who a decade after its founding remarked that "of the approximately 3,000 Ukrainians [in Berisso] unfortunately less than a thousand are nationally conscious." (V.F.T.P., "Berisso," in *Iliustrovanyi kaliendar ukrainskoho tovarystva 'Prosvita' v Argentyni na zvychainyi rik 1935* (Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1934), 55.) That, however, was still a considerable number and the Prosvita activists could take heart in the fact that at least no organization designated as "Russian" resurfaced in the town after the dissolution of the Union of Russian Workers. Half a century later, the newspaper *El Dia* of La Plata would report the participation of two Ukrainian organizations (Prosvita and *Vidrodzhennia*) in the Berisso heritage festivals (see, for instance, its issues for 8 and 23 September 1984) and a little less frequently, the *Vostok* Belarusian association (1 September 1984), but not a single local "Russian" entity.

A special relationship was maintained with its namesake and the organization it was modelled after, the "Prosvita" society of Lviv. Lviv was the site of Ukraine's first Prosvita (which translates as "enlightenment") founded on 8 December 1868 with an initial membership of 64.[425] In its constitution of 1870 Prosvita's mandate was specified as promoting education among the people through the medium of popular publications and the establishment of district branches. It also lobbied for equal status for the Ukrainian language in the educational system in Galicia, on par with Polish, and meanwhile established a network of community reading rooms across the region. By the turn of the twentieth century the society added another objective to its mandate: the raising of the population's welfare. Thus, it fostered the development of credit unions, community granaries, producers' and consumers' cooperatives, and the like, to complement its cultural work. By 1914 it had become the most important mass organization in Galicia and through its activities had spawned a myriad of other organizations.[426] It had been effective in raising national consciousness and improving the economic wellbeing of the population. Its continued growth after World War I, however, was curtailed by the destruction inflicted on community property by the war and by the antipathy towards it of the Polish authorities.

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[424] B.V. "Kulturno-osvitnia pratsia filii 'Prosvity' v Berisso za chas ii isnuvannia," in *Iuvilei 'Prosvity' v Berisso 1924-1949*, 19.

[425] Stepan Persky, "Populiarna istoriia tovarystva 'Prosvita' u Lvovi," in *Narys istorii matirnoho tovarystva Prosvita i ohliad prosvitnykh tovarystv u Kanadi* (Winnipeg: Prosvita, 1968), 19.

There are several factors pertaining to the history of Prosvita in Galicia, especially in the interwar period, which warrant emphasis here in order to better comprehend the evolution of Prosvita in Argentina. One was the fact that Lviv's Prosvita had become an acceptable model for Ukrainians in other regions (although they often faced stiffer official opposition in their attempts to initiate such organizations), as well as abroad, to adopt. The second is that Prosvita in Galicia had to rebuild after the war and the Polish authorities undermined this effort: during the "Pacification" of 1930 many reading rooms were destroyed and in 1936 135 of them, along with one of the Prosvita branches, were closed altogether. Furthermore, the society was forbidden to expand to the other Ukrainian regions under Poland such as Volyn and Polissia. In the interwar period the Prosvita society no longer devoted itself to economic tasks, dropping this clause from its new constitution of 1924 which was then approved by the Polish government. In 1914-1939 Prosvita developed slowly in Galicia: whereas it had a total membership of 360,500 in 1914, in 1930 the number had declined to 140,800; it climbed up to 360,000 members again by 1939, continuing to be a mass force in the region by embracing 15% of the adult Ukrainian population.[427]

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[426] B. Kravtsiv, et al., "Prosvita," in *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* vol.IV, 245-248.

Thus, although Berisso's Prosvita may have found itself virtually alone in Argentina in 1924-1925, it soon became part of a wider and expanding family, whose "mother," as the Lviv Prosvita headquarters was fondly known, provided moral support to organizations bearing its name and adopting its statute in places as far apart as Harbin, China, and Thunder Bay, Canada, or Bosnia in Europe and Montevideo, Uruguay.

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[427] On all these points see Ibid., 248-252 and *Narys istorii matirnoho tovarystva 'Prosvita.'* passim.

The immigrants who founded Prosvita in Berisso, however, did not bring with them a copy of the Lviv Prosvita statute. Their aims were simple and succinct: to unite the community and raise national conciousness. One of its members, Tyrs Petrivsky, an engineer by profession, proposed that the Berisso organization follow a statute. He contacted Petro Karmansky, the Western Ukrainian People's Republic's delegate who, after his fund-raising mission, had settled in Brazil and headed the Ukrainian Union. Karmansky mailed Petrivsky a copy of the Lviv Prosvita statute and thus commenced activity on a grander scale. It was decided to use this statute as a basis for an Argentine Prosvita organization with branches across the country.

## Prosvita in Buenos Aires

On 1 August 1924 Petrivsky, Semen Zakydalsky (a refugee from the Kyiv region), and Ivan Ukhiv, all based in Berisso, met with Hryhorii Nedobii, an eastern Ukrainian from the Poltava region, to found a Prosvita society in Buenos Aires.[428] At this meeting, in which a Prosvita society was founded, it was decided that the Berisso organization (still at that time called *Moloda hromada*) would function as a branch of its newly inaugurated equivalent in Buenos Aires.[429]

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[428] Tsymbal, *Spohady*, 25-26.

Prosvita in Buenos Aires, following the precepts set out by its model in Lviv, was founded as a non-partisan organization: in theory members of all political parties could join. This neutrality towards ideological orientation resulted in a curious situation in which, contrary to the expectations of the founders, the organization was soon overwhelmed by leftist elements (including Communists and anarchists).[430] The first elected leader of the organization, Ivan Shtangret, and its secretary, Oleksa Sitarsky, were Communists. Both were pre-war Galician immigrants in the United States and deported in 1919 for their pro-labour activities, reemigrating shortly after to Argentina from Galicia.[431] Because leftist members dominated the Buenos Aires Prosvita, relations between the latter and its Berisso branch became complicated and infrequent, and the two operated independently of each other.[432] In 1925 Prosvita in Buenos Aires bought its own building with a hall.[433]

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[429] Ivan Kryvy, "Korotkyi narys istorii orhanizatsiinoho ukrainskoho zhyttia v Resp. Arhentyni," in *Kaliendar-almanakh 'Vidrodzhennia' na zvychainyi rik 1942* (Buenos Aires: Vidrodzhennia, 1942), 49.

[430] Ivan Kryvy, "Pershi ukrainski organizatsii v Argentyni," 51.

[431] Onatsky, "Ukraintsi v Pivdennii Amerytsi," 217.

[432] Kryvy, "Korotkyi narys istorii orhanizatsiinoho ukrainskoho zhyttia v Resp. Arhentyni," 49.

Prosvita in Dock Sud

In November 1926, a new, independent "Prosvita" was founded among immigrants in the district of Dock Sud, Avellaneda. Among the founders were Stepan Mandzii and Semen Kashuba, immigrants from Galicia. It was at this Prosvita society that Argentina's first (and longest surviving) Ukrainian-language newspaper was initiated, *Ukrainske slovo*, with its pilot issue appearing on 21 January 1928.[434] Prosvita members at Dock Sud, many of them workers at the local "Anglo" *frigorifico*, had considered joining together with Prosvita in Buenos Aires, but lack of a common platform precluded a merger between the two.[435] After deciding to pursue a separate existence, an initiative group was formed which met on 3 December 1926 at a hired hall to elect a leader. He was Osyp M. Vudkevych, about whom little has been written.[436] The early activities of Prosvita in Dock Sud resembled those of its Berisso equivalent, with amateur theatrical performances, directed by Mandzii, the major undertaking.

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[433] "Tovarystvo 'Prosvita' v Buenos Aires," in *Ukrainskyi kaliendar-almanakh na 1932 rik* (Buenos Aires: Bahattia, 1931), 50.

[434] *Ukrainske slovo*, 6 September 1970, 1.

[435] S.M. "'Prosvita' na Dok Sud," in *Kalendar tovarystva 'Prosvita' na rik 1952* (Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1951), 135.

[436] Ibid.

## The split in Prosvita

Prosvita in Buenos Aires toward the time of the founding of its counterpart in Dock Sud was undergoing internal discord. One point of contention was the very name of the organization. Shtangret, for instance, pressed for a more proletarian name for the organization (thus hoping to steer it in a socialist direction) and proposed "The Ukrainian Workers' Prosvita Society" (*Ukrainske robitnyche tovarystvo Prosvita*). Unable to win sufficient support for his motions, Shtangret and eleven others left Prosvita and founded a rival organization, "The Ukrainian Workers' Self-Education Society" (*Ukrainske robitnyche tovarystvo samoobrazovannia*) on 26 June 1926. By the end of the year the new organization is said to have embraced over 100 members.[437]

Under the auspices of the Self-Education Society, a number of allied organizations were founded in Piñeyro, a suburb of Avellaneda ("The Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian Workers' Society"), Valentin Alsina ("The Ivan Franko Ukrainian Workers' Society"), both in 1927, and Dock Sud ("Progress") in 1928.[438] They maintained links with pro-Communist Ukrainian organizations in North America and subscribed to their newspapers. A serious rift was developing in the Ukrainian community, which threatened to severely polarize the immigrants into two mutually hostile camps.

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[437] Vuiko, "Chakerero," 59.

[438] Ibid.

In an attempt to reach common ground, the Buenos Aires Prosvita decided to hold a meeting of all Ukrainian organizations in the Buenos Aires region at its premises on Calle La Valleja slated for 25 May 1928. This was an exceptional meeting and one of the issues at stake was the orientation of the newspaper *Ukrainske slovo*. The leftist delegates, by their own estimate constituting about half of all participants, wanted the focus to be primarily on matters affecting the well-being of the immigrants in Argentina rather than events in the homeland.[439] On the appointed day some 150 Prosvita members and delegates representing several organizations gathered at the Prosvita hall.[440] Representatives of the left-wing Ukrainian organizations had assembled in force and any decisions reached at the meeting had thus to take them into account. For Ivan Kryvy (originally with the Berisso Prosvita, but now with the one in Buenos Aires as its secretary), the left-wingers were a major nuisance. Unbeknownst to most of the participants, he had set up a trap with the police to have the most assertive left-wingers arrested as subversives. At a pre-arranged time the police stormed the Prosvita building, searched everyone in attendance and took 163 persons to the 25th Police Commissariat station, whereupon Kryvy read aloud a list of 34 names whom the police were to take away to the city prison at Villa Devoto.[441]

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[439] *Ukrainski robitnychi visty,* 17 July 1928.

[440] M.R. "Ukraintsi v Arhentyni i Uruhvai," 44. Stepan Mandzii's figure of 400 persons in attendance (*Ukrainske slovo,* 24 June 1928) appears to be too high.

The 34 prisoners had been blamed for plotting the bombing of the local Italian consulate and 33 of them were flung in a cell which held a larger number of Italian suspects, all Communist party members.[442] Three days had passed without the inmates knowing whether they were to face trial or not. They then threatened a hunger strike.

Ivan Shtangret, one of the 34 arrested, had been isolated from the rest of the group. He had been denounced as a "special case," accused of being an agent for Moscow and assigned to Argentina on a mission to spread Communism among the Ukrainian immigrants.[443] While the other 33 inmates had been released within three or four days after their arrest, Shtangret had been placed in solitary confinement, under threat of deportation to Poland. To prevent this from happening, "because nothing good would await him there," Shtangret's colleagues appealed to fellow immigrants in Canada to help raise funds to pay for a lawyer, who would intervene to secure his release.[444]

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[441] Ibid., 45.

[442] This was revealed in a letter by one of the inmates to a pro-Communist American Ukrainian newspaper, and subsequently reprinted in the Canadian *Ukrainski robitnychi visty*, 28 June 1928. The letter is accompanied by the names of all those who were arrested.

[443] *Ukrainski robitnychi visty,* 17 July 1928.

The incident drove a wedge into the community, causing an irreconcilable chasm which the descendents of the immigrants, three generations later, have been unable to bridge. It was an incident with which the publishers of the single Ukrainian newspaper in Argentina, *Ukrainske slovo*, were uncomfortable, because it clearly jeopardized not only their goal of a unified community, but, concomitantly, its subscription base, too. Several weeks prior to the event of 25 May, *Ukrainske slovo* ran a letter by a Prosvita member appealing to the community at large, without regard to political convictions, to support the newspaper. It was scandalous, the letter writer chided, that the only newspaper for over 60,000 Ukrainians in the country had the pathetic tally of 32 subscribers when, by way of comparison, the much smaller Lithuanian community of 2,500 maintained two newspapers which together netted over 1,000 subscribers.[445]

A month after the infamous 25 May incident, Stepan Mandzii, the editor of *Ukrainske slovo*, presented his evaluation of the affair. The main purpose of the General Meeting at Prosvita in

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[444] Ibid.

[445] *Ukrainske slovo,* 1 April 1928.

Buenos Aires (which at that time had 50 registered members) on that day, he reminded his readers, was to approve its constitution, which would be patterned after the one in Lviv, open subsidiary branches, and seek registration (*personaria juridica*) with the Argentine authorities. The atmosphere in the meeting, in his view, deteriorated into a village fracas when narrow-minded "Moscophiles" and "nationalist-chauvinists" advanced their own separate platforms, forgetting that they were no longer in their native villages, but together in Argentina to face a common destiny. The inexcusable summoning of the police, he lamented, was all the more regrettable because this had been the largest gathering of Ukrainians to date. The whole affair had made a mockery of the unimpeachable reputation of the Prosvita society in the Ukrainian nation, whose constitution mandates cultural-educational work beyond factional politics.[446]

Bringing together Ukrainian immigrants for cultural and general community events proved insufficient to disguise the real cleavages and differences that existed among them. Twenty five years later Ivan Kryvy, who was responsible for soliciting the police on 25 May, without apology explained his position. In his view, the presence of Communists in the Buenos Aires Prosvita obstructed its merger with its namesakes in Berisso and Dock Sud. For three years after the founding of

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[446] *Ukrainske slovo,* 24 June 1928.

Prosvita in Buenos Aires its membership was locked in an uneasy permanence of contradictory tendencies, culminating with the departure of Shtangret and his followers who then founded the Self-Education society. At that time (1925-1928), recalls Kryvy, the Kremlin was fostering a policy of "Ukrainianization" in Soviet Ukraine, which political entities in Western Ukraine, such as Sel-Rob, took as evidence of the positive gains of Ukraine under the Soviets. Succumbing to Soviet propaganda were immigrants not only in Argentina, but also in North America. While propagating the line of immense progress for Ukrainians under the Soviets, the Kremlin, according to Kryvy, ordered the assassination of Symon Petliura, the head of the UNR's government in exile, in 1926 -- on 25 May. This only hardened Kryvy's anti-Soviet convictions even more. Prosvita in Buenos Aires still contained a number of pro-Communist sympathizers by the time of its General Meeting of 25 May 1928, who prior to its convening encouraged their like-minded comrades at the Self-Education society to enlist as members and take over the organization. To prevent this from happening and thus prevent the Bolsheviks enjoying another triumph on the second anniversary of Petliura's assassination, he, along with three fellow Prosvita members, prepared the stage for police intervention and the purge that was to follow. The Communists and their dupes, in Kryvy's words, were rounded up and herded to Villa Devoto "where they were 'treated' for their sickness." It was a radical approach to deal with the matter, Kryvy concludes, but the end justified the means.[447]

The May 1928 affair followed in the heels of President Yrigoyen's reelection in April of that year. It has already been noted that certain sectors of Argentine society did not welcome his return to power. Historian Ronald H. Dolkart, in assessing the reaction to Yrigoyen's reelection in April 1928, declared that "Rightist organizations fomented a climate of extreme instability and distrust,"[448] and, if considered in this context, it is plausible that the 25 May crackdown was deliberately designed to intimidate leftist elements in the Ukrainian community. Ivan Shtangret was probably singled out for greater scrutiny and abuse because of his past affiliation with the Socialist movement in the United States, and because he appears to have been a prime force in motivating desertions to leftism among the Ukrainian immigrants. The 25 May discord served as a symptom of greater and more widespread confrontations between discordant tendencies in Argentina that continued through into the thirties. That decade, according to Dolkart, was a period in Argentine history characterized by "constant political turmoil, much of it manifested in street violence....[and the] source for much of this disorder came from rightist provocations and Radical and leftist responses."[449]

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[447] *Nash Klych,* 21 May 1953.

[448] Ronald H. Dolkart, "The Right in the Década Infame, 1930-1943," in Sandra McGee Deutsch and Ronald H. Dolkart, eds., *The Argentine Right: Its History and Intellectual Origins, 1910 to the Present* (Washington: Scholarly Resources Inc, 1993), 67.

The Argentine right, for their part, pinned the blame for the roots of disorder in the country on foreign immigration. One idealogue of the right, the poet Leopoldo Lugones, complained in 1930 that Argentine "prisons are full of foreigners....The beggars, those who abandon or exploit children, drug traffickers, pornography merchants, alcoholics, tramps, professional agitators: all foreigners."[450] Sharing such sentiments, members of the right campaigned vigorously in the course of the 1930s to stem the flow of new immigration such as the "thousands of Czechs, Poles, Armenians, Bulgarians and Russians who have invaded our shores."[451] The factional strife in the Ukrainian community as exemplified in the incident of 25 May may have served to reinforce a poor impression of this Eastern European group on Argentine observers and provide ready ammunition to anti-immigration lobbyists. When the American embassy in Buenos Aires solicited information on Communists in Argentina in 1930, a faction of the right, the vocal and influential *Liga Patriótica Argentina*, was unreserved in integrating Communism and foreign immigration as a single problem. "Their members are almost entirely foreigners," it conveyed to U.S. embassy officials, "some of whom are unable to speak Spanish."[452]

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[449] Ibid., 70.

[450] Cited in David Rock, "Antecedents of the Argentine Right," in Sandra McGee Deutsch and Ronald H. Dolkart, eds., The Argentine Right: Its History and Intellectual Origins, 1910 to the Present (Washington: Scholarly Resources Inc, 1993), 11.

[451] Cited in ibid.

American concern with the activities of Communists in other countries epitomizes the growing perception of a broader alignment of ideological forces whose mutual struggles transcended political boundaries. The Argentine right certainly did not view its campaign as inseparable from developments elsewhere in the world and particularly followed closely events in Spain in the course of the 1930s. When civil war broke out in Spain in 1936, a right-wing Argentine militant declared: "The fields of Spain have become God's witnesses in the blood of its martyrs and its heroes. In community of faith and inspired by Spain's example, we shall embark on our own struggle."[453] The Argentine right saw itself as part of a wider crusade to obliterate leftism and in this spirit applauded the enactment of legislation in 1932 and again in 1936 that made it illegal to preach in favour of the "dictatorship of the proletariat," for which a penalty of five years' imprisonment could be imposed.[454]

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[452] Cited in Ronald H. Dolkart, "The Right in the Década Infame," 77.

[453] Cited in David Rock, "Antecedents of the Argentine Right," 2.

## Growth of Ukrainian pro-Communist organizations

Faced with this periodic threat of repression, the pro-Communist Ukrainian organizations presented their mandates as those which strove to achieve cultural rather than political ends, a claim which the Argentine authorities did not always find reason to accept. For this segment of the community, the 25 May episode was still another in a series of setbacks that the Communists and their sympathizers sustained in their organizational efforts. All had begun quite auspiciously. The Self-Education Society had commenced with about 100 members and several more had joined the allied organizations in the Buenos Aires environs. But just as in Prosvita there was infighting, so, too, did the Self-Education Society lapse into internal discord. A letter by the leaders of that organization to a Canadian Ukrainian newspaper blamed anarchists and so-called "patriots (Petliurites)" for sowing strife among its members, to the point that the membership had soon dropped to 10 from its original 100.[455] The petty squabbles had continued through into 1929 to the extent that *Ukrainske slovo* could publicize them as ammunition to discredit the opposition. A fight had broken out at the Taras Shevchenko Workers' Society in Piñeyro on 24 February, it reported, between its head, Maika, and Ivan Shtangret, during which Maika lost four teeth. "Why bother going to a dentist to have your teeth pulled," mocked the paper, "when they can be removed free of charge at that society?"[456]

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[454] Dolkart, "The Right in the Década Infame," 77.

[455] *Ukrainski robitnychi visty,* 24 April 1928. The leaders of the organization at this time were S[ylvestr] Mazepa ("organizer"), an immigrant from the Lviv region, O. Sitarsky (secretary) and P[avlo] Chuchvala (treasurer). Its membership had jumped up to 50.

The 25 May incident was a blow from which the Self-Education Society recovered: perhaps it even helped its fortunes a little, for there may have been others who, like Mandzii, believed that the unscheduled excursion to the local police station was unnecessary. In the beginning of 1929 the pro-Communists, who had access to the old Prosvita building in Buenos Aires (minus the furniture and other property, which had been transferred by their rivals to the Dock Sud Prosvita), reconstituted themselves into the Union of Ukrainian Workers' Organizations (*Soiuz ukrainskykh robitnychykh orhanizatsii*) and published the weekly *Proletar*. Both this organization (in 1933 transformed into the Federation of Ukrainian and Belarusian Workers' Organizations) and Prosvita expanded their memberships and opened branches beyond the province of Buenos Aires (see Appendix II). By 1935 Prosvita, with its headquarters in Buenos Aires, had 20 branches and 1,000 members.[457] The Union of Ukrainian Workers' Organizations (UUWO), for its part, boasted a membership in the course of the early part of the 1930s (during which it often led an underground existence) of over 3,000 in 32 lodges. Its successor from 1933, the Federation of Ukrainian and Belarusian Workers' Organizations (FUBWO), claimed 15 branches by 1938.[458]

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[456] *Ukrainske slovo,* 3 March 1929.

In 1924 Prosvita was the only Ukrainian organization in the Buenos Aires region, but over the next decade and a half it had to compete with a growing number of nascent organizations. After the rupture with the pro-Communists, the Prosvita societies of Dock Sud and Berisso were reconstituted as branches of a new Prosvita entity in Buenos Aires. The Berisso branch acquired its own building in 1929 and the one in Dock Sud, the following year in 1930. In 1930 the Prosvita headquarters on calle Gurruchaga in Buenos Aires assumed responsibility for editing *Ukrainske slovo*, which now became the official organ of Prosvita in Argentina.[459]

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[457] *Iliustrovanyi kaliendar 'Prosvita' na rik 1936* (Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1935), 189.

[458] M.R. "Ukraintsi v Arhentyni i Uruhvai," 47. The Argentine writer, Dionisio R. Napal, in his tendentious, but informative book, *El imperio sovietico* (Buenos Aires: Stella Maris, 1933), 278, states that in 1932 the UUWO had five centres in the city of Buenos Aires alone, and branches in Avellaneda, Berisso, Rosario, Santa Fé, Córdoba, Tucuman, Comodoro Rivadavia, Plaza Huincul, Formosa, and Resistencia (Chaco).

[459] "Tovarystvo 'Prosvita' v Buenos Aires," 52.

## Other Ukrainian organizations

Although new organizations arrived on the scene in Argentina after the founding of Prosvita in 1924, they were nonetheless closer to Prosvita than they were to the UUWO in ideology. Such organizations included the Ukrainian National Club (*Ukrainskyi natsionalnyi kliub)* in Buenos Aires, founded on 9 February 1930 in Buenos Aires, by a small group of disaffected individuals who aspired to raise the educational-cultural level of the immigrants higher than existing organizations were doing. The group published the newspaper, *Ukraina*, and maintained a library and a theatrical troupe. It hoped to promote a seminar series on academic and political topics.[460] Both the organization and its newspaper, however, apparently owing to economic difficulties because of the Depression, do not appear to have survived beyond 1932.

The Mutual-Aid Society in the city of Cordoba was another organization which maintained close ties with Prosvita. It was founded on 15 August 1926 by Hryhorii Shendryk. Although the organization acquired its own premises in 1929, it does not appear to have been very active beyond the cultural sphere (it had a theatrical troupe).[461] In 1932-1933 it was absorbed into the local *Sokil* association.[462] *Sokil*, following a model in Galicia, was an organization devoted to calisthenics and, along with its equivalents bearing the same name in the Cordoba suburb of La Falda and Buenos Aires and the *Sich* society in Dock Sud, assumed a quasi para-military character. The original Czech "Sokol" society, which inspired similar associations in other Slavic nations, had played an important role in the Czech national awakening in the second half of the nineteenth century. *Sokil* in Argentina hoped to do the same in that country among the immigrants.

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[460] Ibid., 61-62. The leaders of the organization were: Ivan Hryhorashchuk (president), Mykola Hrinchak (vice-president), A.N. Velychkovsky (secretary), Ivan Lypka (treasurer) and Natalka Skalena (librarian).

[461] Ibid., 63-65.

For this reason a militant faction in Prosvita could find common cause with *Sokil* members. The turn of the 1930s had been marked by some significant developments in the political configuration of Ukrainians in Europe. One was the formation of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists in Vienna in 1929, a radical political organization which sought an independent Ukraine on its ethnic territory by all possible means. A number of Ukrainians in the Prosvita society were allured by this new phase in "the struggle" and proposed forming a solidarity committee for OUN's political front (and its creator), the Ukrainian Military Organization, within the Prosvita framework. They received a flat denial to their proposal from Prosvita's head, Volodymyr Hymon, on the grounds that Prosvita's mandate was cultural, apolitical activities.

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[462] *Ukrainske slovo*, 5 February 1933.

Notwithstanding this refusal, the group did not leave the organization; indeed, one of its members, Ivan Kryvy, assumed the post of editor of *Ukrainske slovo* the following year.[463] As editor, Kryvy was adamant the newspaper should serve the interests not only of the Ukrainian community in Argentina, but also the "liberation struggle." For three years he was allowed to have his way, often reprinting articles from OUN's monthly organ, *Surma*. The editorial board tolerated him, Kryvy affirms, because it was in financial trouble and needed him.[464] But eventually pressure from UNR and Hetmanite supporters (see Chapter One) within Prosvita forced him to quit his position on 24 March 1933.[465]

In the course of editing *Ukrainske slovo* Kryvy established links with the Ukrainian War Veterans' Association of Canada, an organization founded in Winnipeg in 1928 (as the *Ukrainska striletska hromada*, which translates directly as the Ukrainian Riflemen's Community) which assumed pro-OUN sympathies. He was given its constitution and advice on how to set up a similar organization in Argentina. On 23 November 1933 in a downtown building in Buenos Aires, approximately 200 individuals founded the *Ukrainska striletska hromada* (hereafter, the USH), which also adopted the Spanish equivalent of its English name in Canada, the *Circulo de Ex-Combatientes Ukrainianos en la República Argentina [Ukrainian War Veterans' Association of Argentina]*.

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[463] Ivan Kryvy, "Hromadska pratsia natsionalistiv v Argentini," in *Orhanizatsiia ukrainskykh natsionalistiv 1929-1954* ("Na chuzhyni": Persha Ukrainska Drukarnia u Frantsii, 1954), 368.

[464] Ibid. The newspaper was $630 (U.S.) in the red and the subscriptions could not even compensate for this, Kryvy notes. It is possible that Kryvy worked for the paper for free. Tsymbal in *Spohady*, 30, implies strongly in this direction.

[465] Ibid.

Within a year of its founding branches were set up in Berisso, Avellaneda, and Cordoba;[466] in May 1938 the organization claimed over 1,000 active members.[467] In 1934 the USH began to publish its own weekly newspaper, symbolically calling it *Nash klych*, after the pro-OUN periodical in Lviv, which had been banned by the Polish authorities the previous year. Since its founding in 1933 the USH developed fraternal ties with the *Sokil* societies, a relationship which eventually led to an amalgamation between the USH and the *Sokil* society in Buenos Aires: the offspring of this marriage was the Organization for the Rebirth of the Ukrainian State in 1938, renamed "Rebirth" (*Vidrodzhennia*) on 11 June 1939 and retained to this day.[468]

Other organizations close to Prosvita included the pro-UNR

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[466] Ibid., 369.

[467] TsDIAL, fond 358, opys 1, od.zb.108.

[468] Ibid., 370-371. It is not clear what happened to the *Sich* entity in Avellaneda; perhaps it became the basis for the USH branch in that suburb. *Sokil* in Córdoba maintained its independence.

Union of Ukrainian Engineers (UUE) founded in 1931 and which four years later is said to have had circa 50 members.[469] The influence of the UUE, composed of eastern Ukrainians, extended beyond Argentina, according to the Polish Embassy in Buenos Aires in 1935, "to Paraguay, Bolivia, and Peru, where they have contacts with Ukrainian groups in these territories."[470]

Another organization patronized largely by eastern Ukrainians was the Union of Ukrainian Monarchists-Hetmanites (UUMH), founded in Buenos Aires in February 1936. This organization, for which no reliable membership figures are available, was probably comparable in size in terms of active adherents to the UUE. One of its members wrote that the organization in 1936-1939 was composed of a "not very numerous, but compact and active group."[471] In the pilot issue of its organ, *Pluh ta mech*, the UUMH remarked that it had small pockets of sympathizers in the Argentine "provinces, and in Uruguay and Paraguay."[472] The organization was never able to acquire premises of its own, initially operating from the local

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[469] "Los ucranianos en Argentina," 297.

[470] Ibid., 301.

[471] A.A., "Do istorii hetmanskoho rukhu v Arhentyni," *Pluh i mech* no. 10, (November 1955): 19.

[472] "Ukrainskyi hetmansko-derzhavnytskyi rukh v Respublytsi Argentyni," *Pluh ta mech* no. 1 (September 1936): 24.

Estonian Club in Buenos Aires and later (from 1937) switching its headquarters to the house of a member.[473] The activities of the organization grew steadily, so that by 1939 a sports section for the youth was initiated and in November of that year, UUMH's first branch with 23 registered members was founded in Chaco.[474] Uniting this group was a shared commitment to the ideology of the historian and political philosopher Viacheslav Lypynsky, a Conservative who argued for a socially integrated Ukrainian nation under the tutelage of a nationally-conscious elite with a Hetman, or hereditary monarch recognized as the titular head of state.[475] Although this ideology set the Argentine Hetmanites apart from other Ukrainians espousing independence, the UUMH considered their work complementary to the activities of existing organizations dedicated to the ideal of national self-determination. Its leaders described its campaign partly as one in which the organization would act as another Argentine Ukrainian front against Bolshevism, and steer members in the community away from the jails "of V[illa] Devoto and deportation."[476]

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[473] See the addresses provided for the organization in issues nos. 1 (September 1936) and 2 (January 1937) of *Pluh ta mech*.

[474] *Pluh ta mech* no. 9 (March 1940): 19-21.

[475] On Lypynsky's philosophy, see Ivan L. Rudnytsky, *Essays in Modern Ukrainian History* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1987), 447-461.

[476] *Pluh ta mech* no. 1 (September 1936): 9.

The relative strength of the Ukrainian pro-independence forces, for lack of a better description, can be deduced from a letter by the head of the USH in 1938, Mykhailo Prymak, to Metropolitan Sheptytsky in Lviv. In this letter, dated 7 May 1938, Prymak informed the Metropolitan that about three thousand Ukrainians were affiliated with the Prosvita, USH and *Sokil* societies.[477] From this figure it can inferred that the pro-independence and pro-Communist camps were evenly matched through much of the 1930s, at least in terms of active membership, if not in terms of sympathizers, which is more difficult to gauge. The combined total of newspaper titles published by the two camps in the entire interwar period amounted to 13.[478]

## Women and Ukrainian organizations

Photographs accompanying published reports of Ukrainian organizational activities indicate that community events often bore the semblance of a family affair. Ukrainian women in Argentina laboured alongside their male counterparts in factories or on the farms; they did so independently as domestics or in other occupations in the tertiary sector of the economy. Beyond their vital contribution to the household economy, women also played a crucial role in developing Ukrainian community organizations of which some were founding members. Women formed separate wings within the Prosvita society, the first constituted with 20 members in the Dock Sud branch in October 1933.[479] A women's section also operated in the USH from August 1937,[480] and such sections formed an integral part of the structure of the pro-Communist Ukrainian organizations.

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[477] TsDIAL, fond 358, opys 1, od.zb. 108.

[478] For a near complete listing of Ukrainian periodical literature published by Ukrainians in Argentina to 1990, see my research report *The Ukrainian Press in Latin America: A Concise Bibliographical Survey* (Sydney, Australia: Ukrainian Studies Centre, Macquarie University, December, 1990), 8-17.

Ukrainian women did, however, attempt to organize separately outside of existing structures. In August 1933 eight Ukrainian immigrant women, encouraged by the formation of autonomous women's entities in Canada and Western Ukraine, decided to form the Union of Ukrainian Women (*Souiz ukrainok*) in Buenos Aires. Although an independent association, the undertakings of the Union of Ukrainian Women (UUW) typified the nature of activities conducted by the women's wings of organizations in both camps of the community. Such activities included the coordination of social and literary evenings, programmes for children, welfare projects, and the preparation of buffets for community events.[481] Some members of the UUW were simultaneously active members of Prosvita and often the two organizations planned activities as a joint effort. Prosvita leaders, however, gradually came to pressure the Union of Ukrainian Women to dissolve itself and join instead its nascent women's sections, reasoning that Prosvita had nothing to gain from the split energies and loyalties of indispensable female members. The UUW opted for a compromise solution: rather than liquidate the organization, its members would work together with Prosvita's women's section and commit most UUW proceeds to Prosvita causes, but meanwhile retain its own separate identity.[482] Although in practice this resolution detracted from its unique individuality, the UUW, in the duration of its semi-autonomous existence, remained the only Ukrainian organization in Argentina in which women occupied leadership posts and in which women collectively set their own agenda.

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[479] "Zhinocha sektsiia pry filii Prosvita na Dok Sud," in *Kalendar Prosvita na rik 1935* (Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1934), 120. A later source suggests the middle of 1930 as the founding date (Ia. Popovetskyi, "25 rokiv kulturnoi pratsi," *Kalendar Prosvita na rik 1952*, 134).

[480] *35-richchia Zhinochoi sektsii T-va Vidrodzhennia v Argentyni* (Buenos Aires: Vidrodzhennia, 1972), 11.

## Regional differences

What factors accounted for such a deep split in the interwar Ukrainian community, which saw immigrants espousing diametrically opposing goals? The answer must lie primarily with the regional backgrounds of the immigrants, that is, their contrasting historical circumstances. The obituaries and profiles of nearly 600 interwar immigrants, derived mainly from the newspapers *Ukrainske slovo* and *Nash klych*, have been scrutinized for the regions of provenance of the immigrants associated with the newspapers and the organizations. They reveal a preponderance of members from a single region, in this case Galicia. Other details have been drawn from the obituaries -- down to birthplace and the year of immigration -- but not all provide the same quantity of information (see appendices 3-6). The following table documents the regional origins of 578 immigrants (476 men and 102 women) as reported in the publications of Prosvita and Vidrodzhennia and comprise persons who were members of, or close to, these two organizations and Sokil.

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[481] Tsymbal, *Spohady*, 59.

[482] Ibid., 60.

TABLE 18

Immigrants from Ukrainian Ethnographic Lands Sympathetic to Prosvita, Vidrodzhennia, or Sokil by Regional Background

| Region: | Galicia* | Volyn | Eastern Ukraine | Bessarabia & Bukovyna | Trans-Carpathia | Other** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number: | 501 | 55 | 15 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| % | 86.6 | 9.5 | 2.6 | 0.5 | 0.2 | 0.5 |

* Includes the Lemko region.
** Includes Chelm (2) and the heavily Ukrainian populated region of Voronezh in Russia (1).

Source: *Ukrainske slovo* 1936, 1938-39, 1943-45, 1948-1981, 1987; *Nash klych* 1940, 1942, 1946-1980, 1987-1993; *Kalendar Prosvita na 1941 rik*, *Kalendar Prosvita na 1943 rik,* and Mykhailo Danylyshyn, *Ukraintsi v Argentyni*, 266-269.

It is difficult to assess exactly the extent to which there is an imbalance in terms of regional representation in the organizations, but an attempt here is made. The only known survey of interwar Ukrainians according to their regional backgrounds is the Polish embassy's despatch to Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in June 1935. In this despatch the embassy reported that of an estimated 80,000-100,000 Ukrainians in Argentina, 80% (64,000-80,000) come from "Little Poland" (Galicia), 14% (11,200-14,000) from Volyn and 6% (4,800-6,000) from Eastern Ukraine. In addition, it noted, there were Ukrainian immigrants from Romania and Czechoslovakia.[483] The basis on which these proportions were founded is not acknowledged in the despatch, but it is likely that the 80% for Galicians included the pre-war immigrants and their descendants, along with the interwar influx. The proportion for the eastern Ukrainians may follow the number of immigrants registered as Ukrainians in the immigration records (see Chapter Three). If so, it is a belief based on a false premise, because it is known that Galicians, too, were accorded UNR passports that would have had them entered as Ukrainians in the compilations of the Argentine Department of Immigration.[484] The figure 4,800-6,000 is too high to apply to interwar eastern Ukrainian immigrants, but may be reflective of their numbers when combined with the pre-war immigrants from the same regions. On the other hand, the number 11,200-14,000 is too low for the Volynians. As specified in Chapter Three, some 21,335 Ukrainian Orthodox emigrated from Poland to Argentina in 1927-1938 along with 20,000 Ukrainian Greek Catholics. These Orthodox were predominantly Volynians and to a lesser extent Polissians. It is doubtful that Greek Catholics emigrated in superior numbers to their Orthodox compatriots in the preceding years of 1920-1926, and the two groups probably accounted for approximately 50% each of the 71,156 Ukrainian immigrants from Poland (see Chapter Three). The proportion of eastern Ukrainians represented in Table 16 (2.6%) probably reflected accurately their percentage of the overall interwar Ukrainian immigration. The Bukovynians and Bessarabians, as we know from Chapter Three, and Transcarpathians, accounted for 1.25% and 1.87%, respectively, of the 80,000 interwar incoming Ukrainians. The Volynians and Polissians together, then, should account for close to 44% of the entire interwar immigration. Yet their proportion (9.5%) of the Prosvita and other pro-independence organizations, as evident from Table 16, is exceedingly lower and the Galician participation disproportionately higher than their respective shares of the interwar Ukrainian immigration.

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[483] "Los ucranianos en la Argentina," 292.

[484] See, for example, the obituary of Iakym Malishchak in *Nash klych,* 31 May 1962.

It would be useful to gauge, so far as the sources permit, the relative numerical weights of the Galicans and Volynians according to the regions they settled in Argentina. To begin with Misiones, Reverend Tykhon Hnatiuk wrote in 1931 that "in the last six years there has transpired a major colonization of the forests and hills of Misiones [north of the old Ukrainian settlements]," and added: "[the new settlers] are chiefly Ukrainians from Volyn and number over 1,000 families."[485] It is interesting to note that the Prosvita society branches that developed in Misiones tended to do so among the pre-war Galician immigrants in the south of the territory rather than among the interwar Volynian immigrants in the Obera district. Further south, in the provinces of Rio Negro and Chubut, the first Ukrainian immigrants are said to have been Galicians who came in the early 1920s and were followed by another wave of settlers from Volyn and Chelm in 1937-1938.[486] In Mendoza, one visitor wrote that "the majority of the Ukrainian immigration is drawn from Volyn, but there are also settlers from Chelm and Galicia, especially from the district of Buchach: their years of settlement are 1925-1927, 1934-1935, and particularly 1937-1938."[487] In Chaco, one writer noted a plurality of Volynians among Galicians, Bukovynians, and a smattering of eastern

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[485] T. Hnatiuk, "Z zhyttia ukraintsiv v Misiones," in Ukrainskyi kaliendar na 1932 rik, 70.

[486] Ukrainske slovo, 16 March 1969.

[487] Ukrainske slovo, 28 March 1954.

Ukrainians.[488] Volynians are also said to have predominated in the province of Entre Ríos.[489] There is no data pertaining to the divisions in the urban centres, with the exception of a 1945 jubilee report by the daily, *El Puente*, on the 70th anniversary of the founding of the Buenos Aires suburb of Valentin Alsina. Here it was acknowledged that "Since 1926 the influx of Ukrainians in this locality was intense, the majority of them from the regions of Volyn and Galicia, who today number approximately 6,000 residents."[490] It is possible that in the urban centres the Volynian-Galician ratio was roughly equal; in some rural districts Volynians may have been better represented in the late 1930s perhaps because of their relocation from Paraguay, where they formed the bulk of Ukrainian settlers. In any event, the purpose of detailing the regional backgrounds of the immigrants according to where they settled is to correlate these data with the locations of the organizations (see Appendix 2). In other words, was the choice of organization conditioned to some extent by the regional backgrounds of the immigrants in a particular district of settlement in Argentina?

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[488] Iakiv Lavrychenko, "Ukraintsi volyniany v Argentyni, a zosibna v pivn. provintsii Chako," *Litopys Volyni* no.7 (1964): 65.

[489] *Ukrainskyi kaliendar almanakh na 1932 rik* (Buenos Aires: La Fogata, 1931), 112.

[490] Reprinted in *Ukrainske slovo,* 26 August 1945.

The answer must come in the affirmative. The editor of one pro-Soviet journal in Argentina, Znannia, L. Bortniuk, wrote to the Ukrainian Society for Cultural Relations Abroad in Kyiv in 1955 for specific materials from Volyn, given that the majority of the community his journal represented came from that region.[491] While it doesn't follow that only Volynians joined the pro-Communist organizations and Galicians patronized those that advocated Ukrainian independence, it is nonetheless fair to conclude that generally Galician Ukrainians were members of organizations in Argentina which had a precedent in their home region and, likewise, Volynian Ukrainians drew on models which were intrinsic to their experience in Volyn.

The two regional experiences were not identical. The Volynian Ukrainians had, prior to World War I, been under Tsarist Russian rule and had not experienced a major national revival to the extent that their Galician counterparts witnessed under Austrian rule. The national revival of Ukrainians in Galicia had been shaped by their struggle with the Poles, who dominated the local administration, and culminated in armed conflict with the Poles for control over the region in 1918-

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[491] Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi arkhiv URSR, fond 5110, opys 1 od.zb. 797. It was not coincidental that the Iliustrovanyi kalendar Svitlo na 1939 rik, on page 147, when advising its readers not to forget their brethren in the homeland, chose to feature a sentimental poem on Volyn, below which was a picture of a typical Volynian village.

1919. Although subsequently the Western Powers acceded to Poland's claim over Galicia -- so long as Ukrainian minority rights were respected -- Galician Ukrainians did not recognize the new status quo. Furthermore, in the new Polish state, the Ukrainian territories were fragmented into different administrations and governed separately as units to prevent a common cause. Thus, Polish rule in Galicia was not necessarily uniform with that in Volyn. "The governor of Volhynia," writes one historian, "Henryk Jozewski, attempted to entice Ukrainians into supporting the state by granting them limited concessions, while the government's repressive measures in neighbouring Galicia reached a high point of brutality."[492] The lack of uniformity was expressed in the elections to the Polish parliament of 1922: the Galician Ukrainians boycotted them while the Volynian Ukrainians participated.

Although anti-Polish resentment in Volyn did not develop with the intensity apparent in Galicia, Volynian Ukrainians considered their natural place to be with their Ukrainian brethren in the East. Lack of local agrarian reform and perceived progress in Soviet Ukraine spawned pro-Soviet sentiments among the Ukrainian peasantry in Volyn. Sel-Rob (Ukrainian Peasants' and Workers' Socialist Alliance), a pro-Soviet political party founded in Lviv in 1926, found wider support for its platform in Volyn than it did in Galicia.[493] It was only with the banning of Sel-Rob in 1932, the Stalinist terror in Soviet Ukraine, periodic Polish repression, and the gradual spread of nationalist ideas radiating from Galicia, that the nationalist movement made significant inroads in Volyn in the course of the 1930s.

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[492] Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History*, 428.

In Galicia, pro-Soviet and Russophile sentiments had been weak throughout the interwar period. Under the influence of eastern Ukrainians who flocked to the region at the turn of the twentieth century, because of greater restrictions for Ukrainophile activity in the Russian empire, Galician Ukrainians considered themselves to be at the forefront of a movement that called for the liberation of Ukrainians not only from Austrian-Polish rule but also Russian. In 1918-1920 they expended huge human resources for this goal when they created the local armed units, the Sichovi striltsi and later the Ukrainian Galician Army, which fought against the Poles locally and the Bolsheviks in Eastern Ukraine. Their experience under Russian rule in 1914-1915 and 1916-1917 was brief, but sour.[494]

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[493] J. Radziejowski, "Sel-Rob," in Encyclopedia of Ukraine Vol. IV, 580.

[494] Subtelny, Ukraine: A History, 341-342.

## "Minorities without a champion"

In March 1929 a Manchester Guardian Weekly correspondent captured the essence of the Polish-Ukrainian confrontation in Western Ukraine. "Intense land hunger, inhuman political oppression, and the infringement of national rights," the correspondent observed, had given the Ukrainian home-rule movement "an almost revolutionary character."[495] Recent agricultural strikes in several villages in the Lviv district and elsewhere in Galicia, the Polish police killings of striking labourers in Kaminka Strumilova, the raid by Polish students on Ukrainian students' societies in Lviv, and the censorship of Ukrainian newspapers, all testified to this.[496] Such blatant violations of human rights, the correspondent continued, were all the more deplorable in that no firm international action was forthcoming to restrain the Polish authorities:

> **So far the League of Nations appears to have done nothing for these the most hard-pressed of all the national minorities. It is time one of the Great Powers used its right under the minority treaties to call the attention of the Council to the tragic lot of the White Russians and Ukrainians in Poland.**[497]

The Ukrainians and Belarusians, in the correspondent's opinion, were thus "minorities without a champion":

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[495] Manchester Guardian Weekly, 22 March 1929.

[496] Ibid.

[497] Ibid.

> **The German and Hungarian minorities in Poland, Rumania, and elsewhere have at least one advantage -- their case is vigilantly watched and ably defended by the German and Hungarian governments. But no one is willing to champion the Ukrainians and White Russians who are under Polish sovereignty.**[498]

This was a conclusion that many Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina had long since reached, or were in the process of approaching, themselves. Among them were seasoned veterans of Ukraine's war of independence. At the political level, there was Oksana Drahomanov, niece of the leading Ukrainian political thinker of the nineteenth century, Mykhailo Drahomanov. She served in Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the Revolution and then in the UNR's embassy in Vienna before emigrating to Brazil, then Argentina in 1920, where she collaborated with Prosvita in Buenos Aires.[499] At the military level, immigrant Anatol Hurenok bore arms for the UNR. A graduate of Kyiv Polytechnic, he was posted to Manchuria for military service. When the Revolution broke out in 1917, he returned to Kyiv and enlisted in Petliura's army. He distinguished himself in the Battle of Bazar (in the region of Zhytomyr) in November 1921, where he was one of only 120 men who were able to break out of a Bolshevik encirclement and make a dash for the Polish border. He was awarded the UNR's Iron Cross as one of the battle's seven heroes. In Argentina, he is remembered for, among other things, directing the Dock Sud Prosvita's mandolin orchestra.[500]

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[498] Ibid.

[499] See the obituary of Drahomanov in Ukrainske slovo, 14 May 1961.

Viktor Tsymbal was also a soldier of the UNR Army. Interned by the Poles in 1920, he escaped to Czechoslovakia in 1923 and studied in Prague at the Higher Art and Industrial School. After emigrating to Argentina in 1928, Tsymbal designed neorealist posters for Argentine, American, and European companies, winning six awards for his graphic work. Although aligned with the Hetmanite UUHM circle, Tsymbal gave generously to Prosvita activities and was one of their main sponsors.[501]

In all, the profiles on 578 individuals referred to in Table 16 identify 9 of them as UNR Army veterans. Another 54 of them, so far as this information is provided, are acknowledged veterans of the *Sichovi striltsi* or Ukrainian Galician Army. Among them was the administrator of *Ukrainske slovo*, Ivan Kvartsiany. He was converted to the national idea already in his early teens and expelled from his school in Peremyshl for participating in a strike when its headmaster refused to allow a commemoration of Shevchenko. During the Ukrainian Revolution he joined the *Sichovi striltsi* and its successor, the Ukrainian Galician Army, and was wounded several times in battles against the Bolsheviks and the Whites. The Poles harassed him for his nationalist activities long after the Revolution, compelling him to leave for Czechoslovakia. Graduating from Prague University as a mining engineer, he emigrated to Argentina in 1930.[502] Another was Osyp Burban, one of the founders of the USH and a generous donor to its activities.[503]

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[500] See the obituary of Hurenok in *Ukrainske slovo,* 12 July 1970.

[501] For a biographical sketch on Tsymbal, see S. Hordynsky, "Tsymbal, Viktor," in *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* Vol. V, 308. Tsymbal's art is dealt with in Yuriy Tys, "Viktor Tsymbal," *The Ukrainian Review* 4, no.2 (Summer 1957): 44-49. Some highlights of his life are presented in "Viktor Tsymbal," *Ukrainskyi ohliad* no.7 (1961): 73.

In addition, nine of the immigrants were identified as members of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, the most famous one of all being Hryhorii Matseiko. Matseiko, an orphan raised by his aunt, joined the OUN in 1933 at age twenty. A year later, on behalf of the organization, he assassinated Poland's Minister of Interior, Bronislaw Pieracki, who had directed the Pacification in Lviv in 1930. The organizers of the assassination were tried at the so-called Warsaw Trial between September 1935 and January 1936 and the Warsaw government used the execution as a pretext for continuing its operation of concentration camps at Bereza Kartuzka to intern political prisoners. Matseiko himself surreptitiously slipped away to

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[502] See the obituary of Kvartsiany in *Ukrainske slovo,* 25 July 1943.

[503] *Ukrainske slovo,* 28 November 1943.

Czechoslovakia and, on a Lithuanian passport, fled to Argentina where he lived under the pseudonym Petro Knysh. In Argentina he was welcomed by and close to the Prosvita society.[504]

## Social composition of Prosvita members

Equally important to emphasize are the perceptions of the leaders of the rival factions of who joined their organizations. So far as the pro-Communist spokespersons are concerned, the criteria applied to explain the distinctions between the two camps are class differences: the pro-Communist organizations represented the immigrant labouring masses, while Prosvita and the other organizations served the interests of the petit bourgeoisie.[505] Such a distinction, however, is misleading. The profiles of 143 immigrants pertaining to the group of 578 represented in Table 16, for whom an occupation in Argentina is given, indicate that the majority were salaried labourers, or proletarians, and only a minority could be described as petit bourgeois or bourgeois in classical Marxist terms.[506] What would be more accurate to say is that those of more affluent means were *more likely* to join an organization such as Prosvita than a pro-Communist organization. This could be part of the reason that Volynians whose way of life in Argentina became homesteading in areas such as Chaco chose to align themselves with Prosvita rather than an organization whose ideology called for the expropriation of land, although, of course, there may have been other factors involved that can explain Volynian ingression into Prosvita ranks (contact or familiarity with the organization in the homeland, acceptance of the national ideal before departure, successful Prosvita agitation in Argentina among their settlements, etc).

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[504] See his obituary in *Ukrainske slovo,* 28 August 1966.

[505] See, for instance, M.R., "Ukraintsi v Arhentyni i Uruhvai," 42-46; and Ivan Vuiko, "Chakerero," 58-59.

[506] The occupations of these 143 immigrants are as follows: railway construction workers: 11; mechanics: 3; miners: 3; farmers: 40; *frigorifico* workers: 18; seasonal labourers: 18; factory workers: 14; construction workers: 8; self-employed/artisans: 11; traders: 2; engineers: 3; skilled workers: 5; domestic/service: 6; employees in liberal

Memoir literature of Ukrainian immigrants who supported the pro-Communist organizations give the impression that the latter were popular among the unemployed.[507] This may have been true of some, but the same could be said of Prosvita which had no shortage of unemployed members. One of its most vibrant branches, Dock Sud, reported in 1933 that 96% of its members were without work, making fund-raising for repairs to

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professions: 1. This applies only to the first occupations listed. With the passage of time some of these immigrants acquired a measure of social mobility, but it is fair to conclude that the occupational composition as presented above was reflective of those immigrants who aligned themselves with the non-Communist organizations in the interwar period.

[507] See, for instance, the recollections of former immigrants in Argentina in *Iak my zhyly za okeanom. Rozpovidi repatriantiv* (Lviv: Knyzhkovo-zhurnalne vydavnystvo, 1958), 23, 38, 70.

its building difficult.[508] Thus, in spite of their rhetoric and claims to the contrary, neither the UUWO nor its successor, the FUBWO, were able to embrace all Ukrainian proletarians in Argentina. Likewise, Prosvita's membership showed disparities in regional representation, notwithstanding the image it often portrayed of serving as an umbrella under which Ukrainians of all parts could converge.

It is on this score, of regional interpretation, that Ivan Kryvy errs when he blames pro-Communist sentiments on immigrants from "the traditional Russophile districts of eastern Galicia."[509] Because, although key UUWO leaders were Galician immigrants (who prior to 1919 were labour activists in the United States, where "they acquired some practical organizational skills," as one sympathetic source put it[510]) the bulk of the members came from Volyn and Polissia.[511]

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[508] *Ukrainske slovo,* 27 August 1933. See also Ia. Popovetsky, "25 rokiv kulturnoi pratsi," in *Kalendar Prosvita na rik 1952* (Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1952), 131. Popovetsky wrote: "Our Prosvita and workers suffered hard times during the economic crisis of 1931-1934. The majority of the Ukrainian immigrants found themselves without work and this situation continued for some years. The Prosvita building in Dock Sud [completed on 25 May, 1930] at that time attained the flavour of a 'camp': scores of Ukrainian workers found there a roof over their heads. They lived together as one family, dividing between them all that they could obtain -- sugar, *yerba maté*, and the like. Curiously, it was precisely during these hard times that the Dock Sud Prosvita became exceptionally active and informal Ukrainian schools were founded not only in Dock Sud, but also in other nearby localities (Piñeyro, Nueva Pompeia)."

[509] Ivan Kryvy, "Pershi ukrainski organizatsii v Argentyni," in *Ukrainskyi kaliendar na rik 1933*, 51.

[510] M.R. "Ukraintsi v Arhentyni i Uruhvai," 42.

## Volynians, Belarusians, and the Federation of Ukrainian and Belarusian Workers' Organizations

Whether there was any link between Russophilism and the pro-Soviet sympathies of the immigrants from Volyn and Polissia is difficult to ascertain, but it is beyond dispute that Ukrainian national consciousness developed much later in these regions than in Galicia.[512]

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[511] On the other hand, eastern Ukrainians played an influential role in the leadership of Prosvita. Regional sentiments were at times undisguised in Prosvita, contrary to efforts to submerge them. Tetiana Tsymbal recalls that when she proposed to the Prosvita leadership, on hearing of Symon Petliura's assassination in 1926, that proceeds of Prosvita plays be sent to the prosecution's team at the trial of Petliura's assassin (Shalom Schwartzbard), she was told that no money would be sent there because Petliura had sold Galicia out to the Poles (Pilsudski had aligned himself with Petliura in 1920 against the Bolsheviks in exchange for Polish sovereignty over Galicia). See Tsymbal, *Spohady*, 32.

[512] On this point, see the entry on Volyn in the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* Vol. V by P. Hrytsak, et al., who write (pp. 632-633): "[Volyn] was cut off from the Ukrainian national revival of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Until 1911 it did not even have zemstvos, which in other gubernias provided a measure of self-government and within permitted limits supported Ukrainian cultural expression." The corresponding entry on Polissia by V. Kubijovyc, et al. in the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* Vol. IV also alludes on p. 108 to a "low national consciousness" among "both Ukrainian and Belarusian [Polissians]," and adds that during Polish rule in western Polissia in the interwar era, "the Ukrainian language...received no recognition. Polish was the only language taught in schools, and eventually it became the official language of the Orthodox church. No Ukrainian political, social, or cultural life was permitted: Ukrainian institutions, such as the Brest Prosvita and Ukrainian schools, were closed down. All Ukrainian activities were strictly controlled by the local administration, the police, and, in border counties, the military." On the history of Russophilism in Galicia, see the article by John-Paul Himka,

The Volynian Ukrainians were not able to organize politically until after the collapse of the Tsarist regime. Even then, because of Poland's divide and rule tactics vis-a-vis the Ukrainian minority, organizations such as Prosvita were not allowed to develop unchecked in the region. Because they were largely adherents of the Orthodox faith, Volynian Ukrainians were not only a national minority under Polish rule but a religious minority, too: hitherto, in the Tsarist era, they were part of an official state-sponsored denomination. Under new foreign dominion, in which Volynian Ukrainians came to consider themselves second-class citizens, the socialist experiment in the Soviet Union found allure among them. This was reflected in the 1928 elections to the Polish parliament, which attest to pronounced pro-Soviet influence among Volynian (and Polissian) Ukrainians.[513] Because it was believed that Ukrainians were accorded equal partnership in this new, progressive order, many Volynian Ukrainians considered their real place to be in the neighbouring Soviet Union. The hopes of pro-Soviet Volynian Ukrainians were pinned on Lenin and then Stalin in the anticipation of a Soviet liberation from Polish rule.

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"Hope in the Tsar: Displaced Naive Monarchism among Ukrainian Peasants of the Habsburg Empire," *Russian History* 7 (1980): 125-138.

[513] For a breakdown of the returns of the 1928 election to the Polish parliament by political current in Western Ukraine, see the table facing p. 174 in Janusz Radziejowski's *The Communist Party of Western Ukraine 1919-1929* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1983).

In Argentina, where one pro-Soviet Ukrainian immigrant complained of consistently being treated as a foreigner and derided as a *polaquito*,[514] it was more reassuring to present oneself as aligned to a progressive, rapidly modernizing society (the USSR), in which Ukrainians participated as the second largest group, than a member of a national minority under the rule of a landlord-dominated elite (Poland). The message of the Soviet Union was internationalist in orientation. Many members of UUWO were also simultaneously members of the Communist Party of Argentina, where they encountered Belarusians from Poland among whom pro-Soviet tendencies were equally pronounced.[515] The Belarusians and Volynian (and Polissian) Ukrainians shared a common experience under Russian Tsarist rule and also a common frontier along which were transitional dialects. In addition, there were also Belarusian Orthodox who, presumably, would worship in the same churches (Russian Orthodox) as Ukrainians in Argentine urban centres. Moreover, the socio-economic characteristics of Belarusians and Ukrainians in Argentina appear to have been similar. Thus, when the proposal was tabled for a Ukrainian-Belarusian federation in Argentina between both pro-Soviet groups, it was intended to denote similar characteristics and a common destiny for the two. There were obvious problems in this fusion in regards to the penetration of an extraneous influence, as embodied in the case of a Belarusian-Ukrainian matrimony in Buenos Aires whose offspring took classes, not in either of the two heritage languages, but in Russian.[516] From this union of the two eastern Slavic groups in Argentina came the transition during World War II to a FUBWO-spearheaded Pan-Slavic movement whose lingua franca was, as one Belarusian immigrant put it, "that revolutionary language -- Russian."[517]

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[514] *Iak my zhyly za okeanom*, 38.

[515] See *Bielorusia y los bielorusos en la República Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Asociacion Bielorusa en la Argentina, 1953), 49.

The contrasting directions that the pro-Soviet and pro-Ukrainian independence camps assumed can be illustrated by their approaches to events in 1936: whereas the latter were preoccupied with the fall-out of the Warsaw Trial of Ukrainian nationalists that year, internationalist Ukrainians, attentive to the slogan, "For your freedom and ours!", focused on the Spanish Civil War and labour problems locally. The surnames of sixteen Argentine Ukrainians, who joined the International Brigades, can be detected, where they accounted for between a minimum of 3.2% and a maximum of 8% of the total number (200-

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[516] P. Kunda, *V poiskakh zaokeanskogo raia* (Minsk: Gosudarstvennoe izdatelstvo BSSR, 1963), 24.

[517] Ibid. On the genesis of the Pan-Slavic movement in Argentina, see Vladimir Nalevka, "Los congresos eslavos de Buenos Aires y Montevideo en la Segunda Guerra Mundial," *Ibero-Americana Pragensa* 9 (1975): 107-121.

500) of the Argentine contingent of combat volunteers.[518]

That there was no group solidarity that year is epitomized by the inconsonant interpretations of the March 1936 events in Obera. The position of the pro-Communists has already been narrated in Chapter Three. The Obera massacre was featured in the pages of *Ukrainske slovo* with M. Iakimchuk in Misiones offering a post-mortem. While agreeing that the restrictions on *yerba* growing had been motivated by monopolists, Iakimchuk questioned the sincerity of the agitators whose main intent, in his view, was to discredit the Prosvita society before the Ukrainian colonists, by maintaining that the organization, dominated by fascists, did not have their social welfare at heart. He even questioned the agitators' nationality, believing one, at least, not to be Ukrainian at all. The Communists, Iakimchuk concluded, led the colonists along a path to slaughter. Their interests would have been better served had they organized themselves, without the help of Communist, pro-Moscow agents.[519]

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[518] The names of the Argentine Ukrainian volunteers, most of whom served in the Taras Shevchenko-Palafox Batallion, are as follows: Iosyp Rotko, Oleksandr Antochuk, Oleksandr Bozik, Pablo Dovgun, Feodor Jacentiuk, Juan Malanczuk, Mykhailo Dykan, Platon Strozuk, Ivan Khomych, Ivan Vovchok, Volodymyr Zasiura, O. Krenko, Shpak, Hrytsiuk, Drozd, and a K. Tarasiuk, who is said to have sold his share of a bookstore and with the money bought the fares to Spain of himself and 5 unnamed others. The origins of six other names -- Bozhko, Fedorovych, Podbelo, Kulyk, Voroniak, and Aleksandrovych, are difficult to establish: some may have been Ukrainian, but they may also have been Belarusian. These names were culled from the Mackenzie-Papineau Batallion Papers in the Toronto Public Library (History Room), Panas Hubarchuk, "Biitsi z roty Shevchenka," *Vsesvit* 11 (December 1971): 135-137 (for Khomych, Vovchok and Zasiura); *Ukrainska RSR u Velykii Vitchyznianii Viini Radianskoho Soiuzu 1941-1945 rr* Vol. 1 (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo politychnoi literatury Ukrainy, 1967), 324, for Krenko, who was subsequently parachuted into his native Volyn during World War II to organize underground Soviet partisan activity; and A.V. Rudenko, "Belorusskie immigranty v antifashistskom dvizhenii Argentiny," in *Latinskaia Amerika: sovremennyi etap razvitiia* (Moscow: Akademiia nauk SSSR, 1975), 126 and 128, for the case of K. Tarasiuk and the names Shpak, Hrytsiuk, and Drozd, respectively, and Bozhko et al. On the figure for Argentine volunteers in Spain, see Mark Falcoff, "Argentina," in Mark Falcoff and Frederick B. Pike, eds., *The Spanish Civil War, 1936-39: American Hemisphere Perspectives* (Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 318. Whether it was ultimately 3.2% or 8% of the total, the Ukrainian participation was disproportionately high considering they constituted barely 1% of the Argentine population. For general background on reasons for Ukrainian participation in the Spanish Civil War, see Myron Momryk, "'For Your Freedom and Ours': Konstantin (Mike) Olynyk. A Ukrainian Volunteer in the International Brigades," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 20, no.2 (1988): 124-134.

The Evangelical-Baptists in Misiones had no doubt that all the agitators were Ukrainian. "Here [in Misiones] there emerged agitators," wrote one prominent believer, "(unfortunately, Ukrainians) who began to exhort our people to take part in anti-State demonstrations."[520] The settlements were flooded with Communist literature and the Evangelical-Baptist Ukrainians were expected to join the general protests. But on the actual day, 15 March, a group of faithful did make their way to Obera, not to demonstrate, but to worship, and as such, when they passed the protestors, they felt "like sheep among wolves," earning their hostility.[521] Two conclusions were drawn by the Evangelical-Baptists from the tragic event in Obera. The first was that even abroad Ukrainians were not free of foreign (Soviet) manipulation, and the second was that because the Ukrainian Evangelical-Baptists declined to join the demonstrators, the Argentine government did not ascribe to Ukrainians a "collective guilt" and henceforth considered their work more favourably.[522]

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[519] *Ukrainske slovo,* 26 April 1936.

[520] Mykola Soltys, *Ukrainskyi ievanhelyzm v pralisakh Misionesu*, 40.

Prosvita, echoing Kryvy's viewpoint, likewise considered the pro-Communist sentiments among the Ukrainian immigrants to be a logical extension of the Russophilism of old in Ukrainian lands. In an editorial in *Ukrainske slovo* in October 1928, titled "The New Moscophiles" (*Novi moskvofily*), the newspaper contended that the Russophiles simply switched their allegiance from one Tsar to another and now called themselves Communists. They learned the new catch phrases that set them apart as a group, such as "bourgeois Ukrainian nationalists," and followed blindly the Soviet line on all matters. In fact, the editorial argued, the Argentine Ukrainian Communists were more fanatical believers than the ones in Ukraine themselves, who were endeavouring to wrest more autonomy from Moscow. By ignoring the Kremlin's abuses in Ukraine, the editorial concluded, the Argentine Ukrainian Communists were in effect endorsing a foreign power in that republic.[523]

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[521] Ibid.

[522] Ibid., 41.

## Prosvita and national consciousness raising

In their conviction that there lingered such relics of the past as Russophilism in the community, the Prosvita leaders were convinced that the old Prosvita tenet of national conciousness raising and unity were apposite missions to foster in Argentina. The most effective tool with which to achieve these twin objectives was the organization's newspaper, *Ukrainske slovo*.

There are no readily available circulation figures for *Ukrainske slovo*. In March 1929 the newspaper, using a local Jewish press until Prosvita acquired its own,[524] noted that the cost for 1,000 copies was 80 pesos, so it is possible that the circulation was no less than that number.[525] Later that year, in an effort to expand circulation, the newspaper announced that several thousand copies would be issued free of charge[526] and this tactic may have enlarged its subscription base. When the editorial office of *Ukrainske slovo* was raided by unknown assailants in April 1938, the editor noted that the incident took place after "the first one thousand copies had barely come off the press."[527] From this statement it can be inferred that a second thousand were being readied for printing and thus no less than 2,000 copies were to be published altogether.

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[523] *Ukrainske slovo*, 21 October 1928.

[524] Tsymbal, *Spohady*, 50.

[525] *Ukrainske slovo,* 17 March 1929.

[526] *Ukrainske slovo,* 29 December 1929.

The turnover of regular readers of *Ukrainske slovo* may have corresponded to the number of members in the pro-independence organizations (circa 3,000). However, the readership actually extended to individuals who joined the pro-Communist organizations, including Panas Hubarchuk. Hubarchuk recalls the newspaper was read aloud to himself and other seasonal harvesters who were temporarily in Chaco by Semen Zakydalsky, a former lieutenant in the UNR Army and a Prosvita activist. The contents of the newspaper interested them, he acknowledges, because the Ukrainian migrant workers had no other source of information about what was happening in the old country and elsewhere in the world.[528] Even though Hubarchuk was ambivalent about the paper, because, in his view, it intended to unite the community around a nationalist agenda, when he moved to Buenos Aires he continued to buy it in city kiosks until he discovered its pro-Communist competitor, *Ukrainska robitnycha hazeta* (The Ukrainian Workers' Newspaper).[529]

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[527] *Ukrainske slovo,* 3 April 1938.

[528] Hubarchuk, *Za okeanom*, 52.

[529] Ibid., 74-75.

The need for a unified Ukrainian community was stressed by *Ukrainske slovo* from its very inception, maintaining that the lack of a solidified Ukrainian community could make the difference between whether Argentina would be the Ukrainian immigrants' "tomb or salvation."[530] In its second issue, the editors of *Ukrainske slovo* specified the newspaper's aims, which were to federate all Ukrainians in Argentina, national consciousness raising, and to activate classes for illiterates, churches, cooperatives, and information bureaus. As far as the homeland was concerned, *Ukrainske slovo* called for an independent Ukraine without landlords.[531]

At its infant stages the editors of *Ukrainske slovo* referred to the newspaper as a "workers' paper," because, after all, that was the main characteristic of the Ukrainian immigration. This was the Ukrainian immigration's strength, commented Mykhailo Danylyshyn, a Prosvita leader, on International Workers' Day. "We don't have any landlords or members of the bourgeoisie among us," he said, "only workers." And one class, in his view, implied one organization, this being, of course, Prosvita.[532]

But when the pro-Communists split from the organization, and founded their own, the newspaper gradually changed its line. It could no longer confidently say that it represented solely the working class, because this was the main platform of the UUWO. Furthermore, a number of Ukrainian immigrants were on course to hacer la America, or making good as they advanced socially. Therefore, since the UUWO appropriated for itself the title of champion of the immigrant toiling masses -- and its structuring of cultural programmes actually resembled Prosvita's (drama and choral performances, literacy classes, commemoration of major historical community figures, etc), minus the ideological content -- and the Ukrainian immigration slowly came to include members who were no longer workers, Prosvita now had to redefine its orientation. In the 1930s it presented itself as an organization which was above party and class interests. Just as in a democratic society all social classes -- workers, farmers, the intelligentsia, entrepreneurs, and the church -- cooperated with each other to build a state and elected members to parliament, it reasoned, so, too, was Prosvita's goal to represent the nation as a whole.[533] Its class conciliatory position was reaffirmed on Prosvita's fifteenth anniversary, when Ukrainske slovo's front page sported a picture of Prosvita's emblem showing a variety of social strata and members of all ages and of both sexes, rallying around the organization's banner.[534]

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[530] *Ukrainske slovo*, 21 January 1928.

[531] *Ukrainske slovo,* 29 January 1928.

[532] *Ukrainske slovo,* 6 May 1928.

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[533] Ukrainske slovo, 12 May 1935.

[534] Ukrainske slovo, 6 August 1939.

rallying around the organization's banner.[534]

It also considered itself to embrace Ukrainians of all ethnic territories. This was apparent in the report provided by Prosvita's Berisso branch on the inauguration of its restored building in 1935, which emphasized the point that Ukrainians from all regions, from the Carpathians to the Kuban, attended the celebration, as did Ukrainians who emanated from *Zelenyi Klyn* (The Green Wedge), that is, the Ukrainian-populated districts of the Soviet Far East, and those "born in the Argentine pampas."[535]

*Ukrainske slovo* recognized, however, that Prosvita was not able to fulfil its mandate of encompassing all Ukrainians in Argentina. During one of its frequent polemics with the pro-Communist Ukrainians, the newspaper posed the dichotomy of two asymmetrical camps in the community, one national in orientation, the other internationalist. Other communities such as the Germans, it noted, were not bisected in such a manner, because they were politically more mature, thought in national terms, and, consequently, one would rarely find a German immigrant deported from the country as an undesirable.[536]

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[534] *Ukrainske slovo*, 6 August 1939.

[535] *Ukrainske slovo*, 28 July 1935.

[536] *Ukrainske slovo*, 5 June 1932.

The necessity for unity was all the more urgent, *Ukrainske slovo* repeatedly stressed, because they came to Argentina as a stateless people. In 1929, to underscore this point, the newspaper provided the example of the Hungarians, who, on their arrival in Argentina, were greeted by representatives of local Hungarian organizations. They spent a single night in the *Hotel de Inmigrantes* and were then guided off to Chaco. Ukrainians, on the other hand, had no one to meet them on disembarkment at the port of Buenos Aires, no one to offer them advice even on how to send a telegram home. All the immigrants had to guide them, the newspaper said, were rumours.[537]

## Prosvita: social and economic policy

At the height of the Great Depression, in 1932, *Ukrainske slovo* again appealed for greater cooperation. These were tough times for Ukrainians under four regimes in Europe, and they were equally bad for Ukrainians in Argentina, too, who, unlike the Italians, Germans, or Spaniards, had no embassies to turn to for succour. Newcomers were particularly hit hard, having to spend the nights in the civic parks or ports, and what would become of the seasonal workers in the interior once their contracts expired, the newspaper asked. In spite of their pitiful resources, it concluded, this was a critical time for Ukrainians to help each other.[538]

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[537] *Ukrainske slovo,* 14 July 1929.

Such slogans popular in Galicia as "rely on your own resources" and "in unity there is strength" found resonance on the pages of *Ukrainske slovo* and, no less so, in allied publications as in the Prosvita yearbooks (or almanacs, as they were called). In one such yearbook that he edited in 1932, Teodor Khomyshyn appealed to Ukrainians to alter their attitudes on business matters. On the whole the Ukrainian immigration, he said, was suspicious towards anyone in the community who had become an entrepreneur. To them it was better that a member of some other nationality engage in "*hacer la America*" than a Ukrainian. It was time to put these prejudices aside, he advised, and encourage the community's small and uncoordinated business sector. The conditions in Argentina to start up an enterprise were auspicious, he averred; all the immigrant had to do was save up some cash or, together with others, form cooperatives. This was a better prospect than living under iron bridges and among the weeds in the capital's dockyards. A stronger business class in the community would be of benefit to it in general, because it would increase the money supply to invest in general community projects.[539]

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[538] *Ukrainske slovo,* 24 April 1932.

[539] T. Khomyshyn, "V priamuvanni do uspikhiv," in *Ukrainskyi kaliendar na rik 1933 (pid redaktsiieu T. Khomyshyna)* (Buenos Aires: La Fogata, 1932), 41-45.

Another writer echoed the point about cooperatives, believing that there was real potential for cooperative stores, modelled on the ones in Lviv, to develop among the nuclei of Ukrainians in Buenos Aires, Dock Sud, Piñeyro, and Berisso.[540] Indeed, earlier in 1929, during the campaign to raise funds for the Dock Sud Prosvita building, one spokesperson cogitated on whether perhaps it was not preferable to have Ukrainians settle en masse in the capital and its environs, akin to what the Jews and Lithuanians, among others, were doing in order to facilitate the coordination of common projects.[541] *Ukrainske slovo* also propagated the idea of cooperatives, maintaining that the Ukrainian community in Argentina had the same potential as its counterparts in the USA or Canada, only it required greater mutual trust and solidarity.[542]

*Ukrainske slovo* further contributed towards the movement of consolidating the community's economic forces by granting advertizing space to local Ukrainian entrepreneurs. Thus, at various times, Ukrainian restaurant and guest house owners, tailors, a doctor, and the Ukrainian bookstore of V.

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[540] RAT, "Deshcho pro nashu torhivliu," in *Ukrainskyi kaliendar almanakh na 1932 rik* (Buenos Aires: La Fogata, 1931), 45.

[541] *Ukrainske slovo*, 31 March 1929.

[542] *Ukrainske slovo,* 16 December 1928.

Lashkevych and S. Tarasiuk advertized in the paper.[543] Eventually, not only Ukrainians but non-Ukrainians also took advantage of advertizing space in the newspaper, considering the ever-enlarging community a viable market for their sales. Thus, the so-called "Slavic" restaurant of O. Kapusha and O. Biskupa, the Czech restaurant "Sokol," the surgeon David Faershtein, and the colonization firms Atlantica in Buenos Aires and Fram (recruiting settlers for Peru and Paraguay, respectively) publicized in the newspaper, while travel agencies, insurance companies, shipping lines, and several city banks (Banco Germanico, Banco Holandes, the First National Bank of Boston, and the National City Bank of New York) announced that they had Ukrainian employees.[544]

*Ukrainske slovo* often encouraged readers to report on job opportunities whenever they knew of any. A trickle of suggestions of livelihood prospects periodically reached the editorial office. They included one from Viktor Liats in May 1928, who settled in Colonia Dora in Santiago del Estero, where, he noted, a few Ukrainian families had settled alongside Jews, Germans, French, Czechs, and Slovaks. Credit was available to purchase land there, he reported, at the cost of 30-100 pesos per hectare, to be repaid over a period of 33 years.[545] Ia. Slipansky offered an alternative deal in Chaco a couple of months later. There, he reported, the government was awarding 100 hectares of land to families and 50 hectares to individuals. Those tracts of land which lay within 20 kilometres of a railway station, he noted, had to be paid for, but those located further afield were granted free of charge. Up to 100 Ukrainian families were already prospering in the Las Breñas district, he said, and seasonal work could be had locally where the harvesting of 1 kilogram of cotton could fetch 10 centavos and a sack of corn 70 centavos.[546] Vacancies for harvest work were reported for the Las Breñas district for the following autumn and winter months.[547]

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[543] See, for instance, *Ukrainske slovo,* 17 January 1932. The Ukrainian Bookstore also advertized in the pro-Communist yearbook, *Iliustrovanyi kalendar Svitlo na 1939 rik*, 159.

[544] See the advertisements in *Ukrainske slovo* between 1928-1932.

Other vacancies comprised that offered by a tailor in 1932, who required two apprentices aged 18-25, whose salaries would be negotiated.[548] An *Ukrainske slovo* subscriber informed in 1935 of work available in road construction in the province of Salta, while another of manual labour tasks in Pineli, Chaco, where the climate was "hot but bearable." Free passage by railway was available for the latter prospective labourers.[549]

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[545] *Ukrainske slovo*, 6 May 1928.

[546] *Ukrainske slovo,* 1 July 1928.

[547] *Ukrainske slovo,* 20 January 1929.

[548] *Ukrainske slovo,* 17 January 1932.

It appears that a good portion of job opportunities was agriculture-related. Prosvita had no firm position on employment issues, but it was wary of colonization projects which involved Polish government input. It appears to have grown somewhat ambivalent towards the Ukrainian Emigrant Protection Society (UEPS), which, in September, 1931 (following the Pacification), introduced itself to the Prosvita Society in Argentina as an organization with some influence in official Polish circles and hoped to interest Prosvita in cooperating with itself, the Polish Embassy in Buenos Aires and local colonization firms in gathering information on land settlement and employment opportunities.[550] While there is evidence of some cooperation between Prosvita and UEPS,[551] relations cooled in early 1933 when the former called into question the close ties between its satellite bureau in Buenos Aires, headed by Vasyl Mylinsky, and the Polish Embassy, and why both were so interested in promoting colonization ventures.[552]

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[549] *Ukrainske slovo,* 13 October 1935.

[550] Letter to Mykhailo Danylyshyn from UEPS dated 4 September 1931, in possession of his son, Jorge Danylyszyn, in Buenos Aires.

[551] See the letters to Danylyshyn dated 9 November 1931, 23 November 1931, and 6 June 1932, ibid.

To prevent the immigrants from being "guided by rumours," as it once noted, *Ukrainske slovo* regularly disseminated information of possible value to the immigrants. This included procedures on how to sponsor relatives,[553] addresses of non-charging employment agencies across Buenos Aires,[554] and free Spanish classes offered at state-run schools.[555] The yearbooks[556] also performed this service, providing tips on methods of cultivating cotton in the *chacras,*[557] general advice for farmers,[558] laws on credit provisions,[559] citizenship laws,[560] and some wisdom on medical matters.[561]

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[552] See the letter to Danylyshyn by UEPS dated 31 January 1933, ibid.

[553] *Ukrainske slovo,* 29 July 1928.

[554] *Ukrainske slovo,* 3 August 1930.

[555] *Ukrainske slovo,* 31 March 1935.

[556] The Prosvita yearbooks were issued free to those who had paid the 2 dollar (U.S.) membership fee, which also guaranteed access to six library books. See *Ukrainske slovo,* 16 March 1930.

[557] Semen Zakydalsky, "Pro upravu bavovny v Chaco," *Emigrantskyi kaliendar na 1934 rik* (Buenos Aires: La Fogata, 1933), 121-124.

[558] *Iliustrovanyi kaliendar Prosvita na rik 1935* (Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1934), 184.

[559] Ibid., 113-115.

[560] *Ukrainskyi kaliendar almanakh na 1932 rik* (Buenos Aires: La Fogata, 1931), 115.

*Ukrainske slovo* also cautioned its readers against situations which could lead to abuse. One example it gave was that of labourers not receiving their payments from employers and suggested that in such cases the matter should be taken to the Ministry of Labour, the courts, and the police, but to beware generally of employers conducting informal business.[562] The newspaper also proved to be a vehicle through which immigrants, at some point separated from each other, could attempt a search for friends or relatives. Even immigrants in North America used the newspaper for the purpose of finding family members in Argentina.[563]

The newspaper was also a medium by which total strangers could become acquainted with each other. Individuals of either gender placed advertisements in the newspaper offering marriage. "Young black-browed nanny would like to marry a well-adjusted bachelor," ran one ad, and "Artisan, 34, seeks young woman of orderly disposition," proclaimed another.[564] One bachelor, on the road to "*hacer la America*" wanted to share his life with a housewife: "Respectable and rich man of

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[561] *Iliustrovanyi kaliendar Prosvita na rik 1936* (Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1935), 184.

[562] *Ukrainske slovo*, 21 July 1935.

[563] See, for instance, *Ukrainske slovo*, 6 September 1931, which announces that Andrii Moskal, who immigrated into Argentina in 1923, was being searched by his sister in North America.

[564] *Ukrainske slovo*, 18 March 1928.

33, with a steady job, seeks a young woman or widow between the ages of 20 and 30 for marriage. It does not matter if she is poor, so long as she is competent in the kitchen and in housekeeping."[565] Another, a "Middle-aged Ukrainian blacksmith," seeking "a young Ukrainian woman or widow between ages 25-45 (photograph requested),"[566] appears to have had no success the first time round. So it seems he recast his appeal thus: "Estimable and respectable Ukrainian in the blacksmith profession, very secure materially, seeks a young woman or childless widow for marriage. Photograph requested."[567] The marriage proposals came from the most distant regions of the country, among them a "Ukrainian storekeeper in Formosa, aged 31 and homeowner," seeking "a single woman or widow aged 20-35."[568] The odd marriage proposal was framed in an unconventional, rather bold manner: "I live in Argentina," read one, "with no joy or consolation. I would like to change your life -- to marry! Which of you women would like to wed a tall blond of 25?"[569]

## Prosvita: cultural-pedagogical policy

*Ukrainske slovo* naturally devoted a good deal of space to

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[565] *Ukrainske slovo*, 28 October 1928.

[566] *Ukrainske slovo*, 12 May 1929.

[567] *Ukrainske slovo*, 19 May 1929.

[568] *Ukrainske slovo*, 3 November 1935.

[569] *Ukrainske slovo*, 18 March 1928.

Prosvita matters and the promotion of the society's aims. It encouraged readers to take mandolin and violin lessons at the Prosvita hall in Buenos Aires, offered at 5 pesos per month for members and 10 pesos for non-members in early 1928.[570] A major part of the Prosvita mission was the spread of education, and here the society considered it important for its members to learn about other cultures while they retained their own heritage. Argentinian short stories were translated into Ukrainian,[571] in one of many instances of bridging the two cultures. Another was the publishing of Stepan Mandzii's, then an employee at the Banco Germanico, Spanish-Ukrainian dictionary in 1929.[572] In the newspaper's campaigns to initiate *ridni shkoly* (part-time Ukrainian schools) it was stressed that their goal was for the pupils to learn about their heritage, to respect foreign civilizations, and to grasp basic etiquette, so that they would return home to their parents wise and affectionate children with good manners.[573] Education from whichever source was Stepan Naumliuk's prerequisite for the immigrant children. Naumliuk, who instructed in Dock Sud *ridna shkola*, noted in 1935 that it was a good state policy for education to be compulsory, because in the absence of any *ridna shkola* the Ukrainian children would at least be receiving an education from elsewhere, which to them was essential for coping in unstable economic times.[574]

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[570] *Ukrainske slovo*, 1 April 1928.

[571] See, for instance, *Ukrainske slovo,* 26 August, 2 September and 9 September 1928.

[572] *Ukrainske slovo*, 29 December 1929.

[573] *Ukrainske slovo*, 3 April 1932.

There were several obstacles to the development of the *ridna shkola* in Argentina. One was, as S. Pryimak in Chaco pointed out in 1935, the lack of suitably qualified teachers.[575] More insurmountable was the lack of a steady stream of funds. Stepan Mandzii, a pioneer of the *ridna shkola* in Dock Sud initiated in February 1932, the first founded by the interwar immigrants in the province of Buenos Aires, described in detail the problems it was subsequently facing, mainly because of financial constraints. Each parent, he noted, was supposed to pay 3 pesos per pupil or 5 pesos for two pupils attending the school on a monthly basis. In the first school year some 45 pupils attended two schools in Dock Sud and Berisso, but because most of the children's parents were unemployed scarcely one-third of the payments were honoured. This was sorely felt by the teachers themselves, whose income would consequently rarely rise above 20 pesos a month, but the pitiful recompense did not deter the teachers from their vocation. In order to overcome the financial handicap, Prosvita decided to allocate 10% of the proceeds of all cultural public functions to a school fund and set up a school section to coordinate such activities as fund-raising, the maintenance of libraries, and the fixing of a teacher's salary at 70 pesos a month. The children of the unemployed were to have their tuition fees waived.[576]

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[574] *Ukrainske slovo*, 1 September 1935.

[575] *Ukrainske slovo*, 26 May 1935.

Tetiana Tsymbal taught at the *ridna shkola* in Valentin Alsina, which was only able to exist because of the charity of her husband, Viktor Tsymbal, the donations of other wellwishers,[577] and her own voluntary efforts. Sometime in 1931, she recalls, she visited Valentin Alsina and observed that while many Ukrainians lived there, not a single *ridna shkola* was maintained by the local community and it seemed that the children did not attend any school at all, spending the day running about on muddy streets without supervision while their parents were out at work. She herself had been working in a sugar factory in Buenos Aires, but now that her husband was steadily drawing a decent income from his commercial art, there was no pressure for her to retain her job. Quitting, she decided to devote her time to setting up a *ridna shkola* in Valentin Alsina. A building was rented at the couple's expense and the next step was to persuade the parents to send their children to the school. She went from door to door reasoning with parents that it was better for them to have their children be literate and receive a meal free of charge than to allow the children to roll around in mud all day. At first the parents were mistrustful, suspecting ulterior motives, and only a few sent their children. But when it did transpire that, indeed, the children were being taught how to read and write, learned Ukrainian folk-songs, played games, and were nourished with a bun and milk at midday, more enlisted their progeny in the school. Tsymbal used the latest school textbooks published in Lviv bought in a bookstore in Dock Sud.[578] Towards the end of the school year Tsymbal would prepare her pupils for a school play in which approximately 40 would take part,[579] and, on one occasion at least, organized a joint (Julian Calendar) Christmas Eve party on 6 January 1935 for the Dock Sud and Valentin Alsina school children, at the premises of the latter school, in which 150 pupils are said to have been present, receiving gifts paid for by Viktor Tsymbal.[580]

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[576] Stepan Mandzii, "Ridna shkola v Argentyni," in *Kaliendar Prosvita na 1934 rik* (Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1933), 69-75.

[577] This included such gifts as six loaves of bread by a certain Mr. Molochaniv for the children's lunch. See *Ukrainske slovo,* 21 April 1935.

Notwithstanding these noble efforts, the *ridni shkoly* were not the best developed activity of the Prosvita society. When it compiled its annual report in July 1935, Prosvita declared that there were 16 amateur drama troupes annexed to its 20 branches (only four of which had their own buildings) and six choirs, but only five *ridni shkoly*.[581]

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[578] Tsymbal, *Spohady*, 46-48.

[579] *Ukrainske slovo*, 8 December 1935.

[580] *Ukrainske slovo*, 13 January 1935; Tsymbal, *Spohady*, 47.

## Prosvita: ties with Ukraine

The report also disclosed that in the first half of 1935 the Prosvita society had donated monies to the following causes in Western Ukraine and elsewhere: 240 pesos to Ukrainian war invalids, 359.55 pesos to a military fund (*boievyi fond*), 43.85 pesos to political prisoners, 80.10 pesos to the Museum of the Liberation Struggle in Ukraine of Prague, 30 pesos to refugees from Soviet Ukraine, and 97 pesos to Prosvita Headquarters in Lviv.[582] These donations reflected another major activity of Prosvita, which was to assist the homeland. It is this role which has characterized the relationship of the Argentine Ukrainian community (of either camp) with the ancestral homeland from Petro Karmansky's visit to Misiones in 1922 and which, to a certain degree, has persisted to this day.

The contributions to causes in Western Ukraine would be raised in several ways. One was through direct appeals in the press, as in the case of a plea for relief funds for flood victims in Transcarpathia in February 1928 and later in the same year in Galicia.[583] Another was through such activities as carolling[584] or the proceeds from Prosvita-sponsored plays.[585] There was no shortage of causes to support in the homeland, of which Prosvita in Buenos Aires was constantly reminded. It received a regular flow of letters such as one dated 15 February 1929 from the people of Tarnavka in Galicia, who, encountering difficulties in obtaining funds from the government for a building to house the local Prosvita society and cooperative, turned instead to the immigrants in Argentina.[586] A similar appeal, in December 1930, came from the Sister Servants of the Immaculate Virgin Mary in Lviv, who had in fact been urged by the people of Tarnavka to approach the immigrants in Argentina. The Sisters required funds to support orphans and maintain a *ridna shkola*. Prior to Polish rule they had always been guaranteed financial support from the Austrian government, but under Poland they could not regularly expect this and, after the Pacification, not only were funds from official sources completely cut off, but they were even forbidden to fund-raise locally.[587] The general sentiment on the part of those seeking subsidies from abroad was expressed in an appeal of 1932 by the villagers of Verbiv, in the Berezhany district of Galicia, who in their request for funds for a community hall, wrote to the immigrants in Argentina that: "We know that all is not well with you, but however bleak conditions may be there, they can't be any worse than they are here."[588]

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[581] *Ukrainske slovo*, 4 August 1935. The report also added that the combined holdings of Prosvita libraries amounted to 2,500 volumes and that Prosvita's assets totalled 35,000 pesos in liquid capital and 75,000 pesos in property assets.

[582] *Ukrainske slovo*, 25 August 1935.

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[583] *Ukrainske slovo*, 5 February and 23 September 1928.

[584] *Ukrainske slovo,* 12 January 1930, on carollers raising monies for invalids of the Ukrainian Galician Army.

[585] *Ukrainske slovo,* 21 October 1928, which reported that proceeds from two plays performed in Buenos Aires were donated to invalids of the Ukrainian Galician Army.

[586] Letter in the private archives of Mykhailo Danylyshyn in possession of his son, Jorge Danylyszyn.

## Prosvita: inter-ethnic relations

Non-Ukrainians in Argentina, wittingly or unwittingly, also contributed to Ukrainian causes. Among the "worker-donors" in Leales, Tucuman, who contributed a share of their earnings to the *ridna shkola* fund in Lviv in September 1928 were seven Ukrainians, three Poles, and two Germans.[589] Non-Ukrainians often attended Prosvita cultural functions, "even though they couldn't understand Ukrainian," as one member in Dock Sud remarked.[590] Indeed, non-Ukrainians showed up to a Prosvita play on 29 April 1935 in Tres Capones, Misiones, in greater numbers than Ukrainians, leading an organizer to wonder where he went wrong in his effort to attract members of the local

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[587] Letter to Prosvita dated 7 December 1930, ibid.

[588] *Ukrainske slovo*, 17 April 1932.

[589] *Ukrainske slovo*, 23 September 1928.

[590] *Ukrainske slovo*, 1 December 1935. See also *Ukrainske slovo,* 28 July 1935, for a similar trend in Rosario.

Ukrainian community![591]

Prosvita made a point of developing fraternal ties with members of other ethnic groups and inviting their delegates to Prosvita commemorative events and concerts. The purpose was two-fold: to draw attention to the Ukrainian cause but also to make a sincere gesture of goodwill. Ukrainians often used the community halls of other immigrant groups before they established their own. The German hall Vorwärts in Buenos Aires was used by Prosvita members and by other Ukrainian organizations, too.[592] Prosvita members in Berisso used the local "Hogar Lituanio" for concerts in 1935 while its own building was being restored.[593] When the renovations had been completed, representatives of the local Italian, Lithuanian, and Croatian communities participated in the inauguration of the new building.[594]

Friendly ties were also developed with other groups by organizing such events as chess tournaments. A Ukrainian chess club founded in late 1935 often challenged chess teams in local cafeterias in Buenos Aires.[595] Ukrainians also had an autonomous status in multiethnic cooperatives in Chaco. This was the case in one agricultural cooperative in Las Breñas where, in 1935, Ukrainians accounted for 222 of its over 600 members. The producers' and consumers' cooperative bought and sold the cotton of local colonists and maintained a communal warehourse. It also had a library whose holdings were valued at 1,500 pesos; the Ukrainian component of this library was worth 200 pesos. Monies disbursed for library books for the co-op included the purchase of Ukrainian texts.[596]

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[591] *Ukrainske slovo*, 19 May 1935.

[592] Including, at least initially, by the pro-Communists. *Ukrainske slovo*, 4 March 1928, for example, announced that the Self-Reliance Society would be staging Myroslav Irchan's play, "Buntar," there the following week.

[593] *Ukrainske slovo*, 24 March 1935.

[594] *Ukrainske slovo*, 11 August 1935.

Ukrainian attitudes towards other ethnic groups sometimes depended on the immigrants' perceptions of where they stood on the Ukrainian question, and at times stereotypes were formed around these beliefs. The Jews were a case in point. Jews outside the Soviet Union supported a Soviet initiative to settle Jews in autonomous territorial units in southern Ukraine,[597] which Ukrainian spokespersons in Argentina opposed. "For the Jews the Crimea, but for Ukrainians -- Siberia," read one editorial that reported the turning over of 109,000 hectares to 15,000 Jewish families in the Crimea by

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[595] *Ukrainske slovo*, 5 January 1936.

[596] *Ukrainske slovo*, 1 December 1935.

[597] *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* Vol. II, 389.

1928.[598] Although there may have been Jews in Argentina who approved of this initiative,[599] any Jewish and Ukrainian differences did not develop into open antagonism in Argentina; on the contrary, where actual contact between the two in Argentina has been reported in local Ukrainian press and literature, alluded to elsewhere in this chapter (the Jewish wedding band in Berisso, the use of a Jewish printing press in Buenos Aires, etc), the context suggests cordial, albeit formal relations.[600]

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[598] *Ukrainske slovo*, 30 September 1928.

[599] The founding of the Organization for Settlement of Jewish Toilers on Land in Russia in Argentina in November 1924 (see Victor A. Mirelman, *Jewish Buenos Aires, 1890-1930: In Search of an Identity* [Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990], 144-145) appears to have coincided with the Soviet decision in the same year to establish two official bodies to promote Jewish rural settlement, whose attention initially seems to have focused primarily on Ukraine and later on Birobidzhan, where an autonomous republic was set up in 1934.

[600] Relations with Poles in Argentina, however, appear at times to have been openly strained. One negative episode was related to me in a letter dated 21 May 1987 by Edmund S. Urbanski, then a retired Latin Americanist. Referring to Florian Czarnyszewicz, a "worker-turned-writer," Urbanski notes that in a book Czarnyszewicz wrote in 1958, the author described an incident in Berisso ("where there were more Ukrainians than Poles") where "he was once locked up in a huge refrigerator [in a slaughterhouse] by two fellow Ukrainian workers," while on another occasion "his family was abducted." But there were also signs of cooperation between the two communities: Prosvita members in Berisso, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, used the facilities of the local Polish community before acquiring their own. In May 1930, perhaps so as not to offend any Polish guests that might have been present, at a general Prosvita meeting the key opening words from a poem, *Ne pora*, by the turn-of-the century Western Ukrainian bard, Ivan Franko, which referred to terminating servitude to "Muscovites and Poles," were modified when sung, so that the latter were replaced with "Muscovites and landlords." To Ivan Kryvy, this substitution was unforgivable,

Ideological orientation often coloured ethnic relations, as was the case with Ukrainian-German relations in Argentina. Depictions of Germans in *Ukrainske slovo* were generally favourable. The newspaper praised the local German paper, *Deutsche La Plata Zeitung,* for featuring a sympathetic article on the Ukrainian question in 1929.[601] An article featured in *Ukrainske slovo* by Ivan Paliatynsky, written when the 1930s were drawing to a close, extolled the qualities of German colonists in regions such as Misiones, Chaco, and Paraguay, whose self-discipline, group solidarity, enlightenment, and guidance by Christian values contrasted with Ukrainians' backwardness and spiritual decay. It was little wonder, according to Paliatynsky, that even though they heavily outnumbered the Germans in districts such as the Fram colonies of Paraguay (in the Department of Itapúa), Ukrainians lagged far behind the Germans and other immigrant groups in terms of levels of economic progress. In Misiones, he affirmed, Ukrainians were referred to as the "white Indians."[602]

It is difficult to confirm whether Paliatynsky's sorry

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since, in his conviction, it detracted from the crimes both groups had inflicted on the Ukrainian people. See *Ukrainske slovo*, 18 May 1930. It is very probable that relations between Ukrainians and Poles in Argentina deteriorated markedly after the Pacification of Galicia in the summer and autumn of 1930.

[601] *Ukrainske slovo*, 31 March 1929.

[602] *Ukrainske slovo*, 27 February 1938.

caricature of the Ukrainian farmers in the Argentine northeast and Paraguayan southeast stemmed from a possible infatuation with political developments in central Europe, frustration with the colonists' lack of response to organization, or whether indeed he had a well-founded point. His account, however, conflicted sharply with Tykhon Hnatiuk's (who was the Orthodox pastor for many of the colonists in the aforementioned districts) report of Ukrainians in the colonies of Paraguay. Hnatiuk's detailed description of one of these colonies, aptly named Nueva Volyn, since it was composed chiefly by settlers from Volyn and to a lesser extent Polissia, depicts an idyllic, almost Tolstoyan lifestyle by which the pious Orthodox colonists engaged in forms of cooperative labour and mutual-help, and among whom alcoholicism and crime were unknown. The colony, Hnatiuk maintains, was neater in appearance that the neighbouring German colony of Gogenau founded more than a decade earlier, and the colonists' economic standard was "no worse than that of other colonists in the area."[603]

## Community responses to events in Europe

Detractors of the nationalist Ukrainian community in Argentina have often labelled it as pro-German and pro-fascist,[604] a characterization with which it was stigmatized during World War II.[605] There is little doubt that members of that community were attracted to the new models emerging in southern and central Europe. The USH certainly stood at the opposite end of the ideological spectrum to that occupied by FUBWO: while the latter, for instance, supported the Spanish Republican efforts during Spain's Civil War, the former participated in a special dinner in June 1937 organized by local Falangists, together with radical right elements drawn from other immigrant communities (Belgian, German, and Italian).[606] Expressions of admiration for Europe's rightist authoritarian leaders can particularly be found in the pages of *Nash klych*.[607] But inappropriate conclusions should not be drawn from such tributes: Ukrainian nationalists in Argentina, as elsewhere, were interested in a "New Order" in Europe to the extent that it might make room for an independent Ukraine. There were, of course, certain parallels in philosophy -- as evident in the sides taken in the Spanish Civil War in what was a shared passionate abhorrence of Communism. Given such mutually shared basic traits, the nationalists' logic can be summed up in terms of "an enemy of an enemy is a friend." There were, however, limitations in the lengths to which even the most militant nationalists would cooperate with groups advocating a pro-fascist New Order. The USH obdurate slogan, "Ukraine for the Ukrainians," certainly did not provide for a Nazi German occupation![608] Furthermore, it had good reason to suspect German motives after Hitler allowed Hungary to overrun Transcarpathia, which in March 1939 declared its independence as "Carpatho-Ukraine." The USH had raised $4,000 (U.S.) from local sources to assist this short-lived state;[609] ironically, a portion of the sums collected some donors expected to be earmarked for the effort in Carpatho-Ukraine is said to have been invested in sending telegrams of goodwill to Axis leaders, for which the USH executive was chided by critics from within the pro-independence Ukrainian community.[610]

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[603] Tykhon Hnatiuk, "Ukr. koloniia 'Nova Volyn' v Parahvaiu," *Iliustrovanyi kaliendar-almanakh Prosvita na rik 1934* (Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1933), 85-88.

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[604] On community press reports of this see *Ukrainske slovo*, 30 July 1939, and *Nash klych,* 5 August 1939. See also A.A. Strelko, "Antifashitskoe dvizhenie immigrantov-slavian," in *Sovetskii Soiuz-Latinskaiia Amerika v gody vtoroi mirovoi voiny k 30 letiiu pobedy* (Moscow: Akademiia Nauk SSSR, 1975), 42. Polish official circles, from 1934, also charged Ukrainian-German links and a Ukrainian fifth column in Argentina. See *Nash Klych*, 4 July 1974.

[605] See, for instance, Ia. Popovetsky, "25 rokiv kulturnoi pratsi," in *Iliustrovanyi kalendar Prosvita na rik 1952* (Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1952), 132.

[606] Ernesto Goldar, *Los argentinos y la guerra civil española* (Buenos Aires: Contrapunto, 1986), 176-177.

[607] See, for instance, the Sokil portions of *Nash klych*, 17 April 1937 and 2 April 1938.

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[608] See, for instance, *Nash klych*, 12 March 1938.

[609] This is the figure quoted in Mykhailo Prymak's (who helped spearhead the campaign) obituary in *Nash klych*, 20 August 1964. While at first glance the sum of $4,000 (U.S.) may not seem substantial, Ivan Kryvy postulates that the over 12,000 pesos collected (once reconverted back into local currency) in Argentina for the Carpatho-Ukrainian government should be viewed in the perspective of early 1939 earnings for the immigrant labourers, which averaged at 3.50 - 4 pesos daily. See Kryvy, "Hromadska pratsia natsionalistiv v Argentini," 371.

Germany's Carpatho-Ukraine policy had confirmed Prosvita's worst fears. Earlier, editorials in *Ukrainske slovo* had suggested that Germany stood as the Ukrainians' single ally, but expressed grave reservations about Nazi racial ideology, which, it correctly predicted, could only have "fatal consequences," while the Allies' abandonment of Czechoslovakia to its own fate was sufficient verification of the fallacy of relying on a foreign power for assistance.[611] In early March 1939 the newspaper distanced itself even further from the German Reich by calling upon its readers to wage a propaganda campaign in Argentina which would disassociate the Ukrainian name from Nazi objectives (even if this was unpalatable "to some Ukrainians who believe that only Germany will liberate Ukraine"). The Ukrainian question, it accentuated, "will be resolved by Ukrainians alone."[612] This was a position it reaffirmed with added vigour after the Carpatho-Ukraine fiasco and the revelation of the Nazi-Soviet pact of 23 August 1939, which led to the incorporation into the USSR of the Ukrainian territories under Poland.[613]

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[610] Such objections were voiced by I. Cherednychenko in his "Hrosheva afera O.D.V.U. abo: iak my tse bachymo," *Pluh ta mech* no.8 (May 1939): 17-18.

[611] *Ukrainske slovo*, 29 January 1939.

[612] *Ukrainske slovo*, 5 March 1939.

Needless to say, relations between pro-Communist Ukrainians and anti-Communist Germans in Argentina were acrimonious. Such incompatability in purpose came to the fore in the bloody events in Obera on 16 March 1936, described in Chapter Three: German and Scandinavian names figure prominently among those accused of collaborating with the police in beating the demonstrators.[614]

## Prosvita and Ukrainians abroad

Prosvita members in Argentina, as this chapter has suggested, may have considered themselves part of "a minority without a champion," but they were aware that they formed a segment of a wider Ukrainian emigration. Ties between Ukrainians in Argentina and those in North America, for instance, were close. Ukrainians in the United States, in particular, considered the Argentine Ukrainian community in this period a reservoir which it could tap for various causes. When Senator R. Copeland proposed a bill in early 1930 to recognize the UNR, for instance, the Prosvita society wrote a letter in

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[613] See *Ukrainske slovo*, 19 March 1939 and 17 September 1939.

[614] See, for instance, Onufrii Melnychuk, "Na chuzhyni," 34-35.

English expressing their support for his initiative.[615] Prosvita also responded to an American Ukrainian appeal for funds for a Ukrainian Pavilion at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1933,[616] to which Argentina's Ukrainians generously gave $1,500 (U.S.).[617] The ties were further strengthened by visits to Argentina from Ukrainians in the USA, among them, the one paid by dance maestro, Vasyl Avramenko, along with Ivan Savchak, in 1929. They taught Ukrainian folk dancing in Dock Sud twice a week for a brief period from 11 May 1929.[618] Other visits to Argentina made by Ukrainians abroad included the one by Omelian Senyk-Hrybivsky, a founder of the Ukrainian Military Organization. Arriving in Argentina via Brazil in May 1938 he brought with him the news of the assassination of the leader of the OUN, Ievhen Konovalets, by a Soviet agent on 23 May 1938, which stirred the local community.[619]

*Ukrainske slovo* also reported on Ukrainian life elsewhere abroad, for instance, on the organizational efforts in 1930 of the estimated 100,000 Ukrainians in France, who were, the newspaper wrote, members of one family abroad, which shared the same concern about the homeland.[620] The newspaper followed with keener interest developments in the smaller, but more active Ukrainian community in Manchuria, China. This community, centred largely in the city of Harbin, included members who, during the years of the Revolution, had agitated for the self-determination of the Ukrainian populated districts of the Soviet Far East (the Amur, Khabarovsk, and Primore regions), collectively known unofficially as the Green Wedge (*Zelenyi Klyn*). Believing war between Japan and the Soviet Union to be inevitable, political activists in Manchuria hoped from 1935 to raise a Ukrainian legion composed of local volunteers which would liberate their brethren north of the border in the Green Wedge.[621] The significance of this plan to pro-independence Ukrainians in Argentina will become clearer later in the chapter as the community's relationship with the Polish state is discussed.

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[615] *Ukrainske slovo*, 6 April 1930.

[616] *Ukrainske slovo*, 20 November 1932.

[617] This is the sum cited in Mykhailo Prymak's obituary in *Nash klych*, 20 August 1964.

[618] *Ukrainske slovo*, 12 May 1929.

[619] On this visit and the local reaction to Konovalets's assassination, see Ivan Kryvy, "Hromadska pratsia natsionalistiv v Argentini," 370-371, and *Ukrainske slovo*, 12 June 1938.

The firmest ties with Ukrainians abroad, however, were maintained with those in the adjacent communities in Brazil and, even more so, Paraguay and Uruguay. Ukrainians in the two latter countries, most of whom settled there in the course of the 1920s and 1930s, developed similar organizations to their counterparts in Argentina.[622] Prosvita societies were founded in both countries, but could not function as branches of the one in Buenos Aires because they resided beyond the political boundaries of Argentina (there were no legal provisions to allow an organization in Argentina to maintain branches in foreign countries). Nevertheless, fraternal links were the rule between the Prosvita societies in Paraguay and Uruguay and the one in Buenos Aires, on whom they were modelled. That these societies drew inspiration from the activities spearheaded by Prosvita in Buenos Aires is evident in the November 1935 statement by the leader of Prosvita in Montevideo, T. Litoshenko, scarcely a year after its founding, that Argentina's Prosvita headquarters in Buenos Aires acted as a "kind of Ukrainian consulate" in the Southern Cone.[623]

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[620] *Ukrainske slovo*, 7 September 1930.

[621] See, for instance, *Ukrainske slovo*, 17 March 1935. For materials dealing with the history of Ukrainians in the Far East, see pages 5-6, 10, 15, and 33-38 of my *Ukrainians in Russia: A Bibliographical and Statistical Guide* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1994).

## Championing the Ukrainian cause in Argentina

The role of representing the Ukrainian nation in the seventh largest country in the world was certainly one that Prosvita appraised as a mandatory task. But it considered itself more than a mouthpiece for Ukrainian affairs, because, in its view, there was real potential for Ukrainians in Argentina to effect changes in the *status quo* of the homeland. Towards the middle of 1929 *Ukrainske slovo* drew its readers' attention to examples of communities abroad playing a vital role in the liberation of their homelands from foreign rule: the Irish in the USA with respect to the attainment of Irish independence in 1921; Tomas Masaryk who lobbied for a Czechoslovakian state also in the USA, and later became its first leader; the lobbyings of the Jewish diaspora for a Palestinian state and Polish exiles for a restored Poland, and countless other cases were cited by the newspaper. Ukrainians in Argentina also could make a difference, the newspaper argued, by uniting behind a common effort, mounting a propaganda campaign in Spanish, drafting petitions and staging acts of protest to win others over to their cause.[624]

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[622] On the histories of these two communities, see the entries on "Paraguay" and "Uruguay" in *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, volumes III and V, respectively.

[623] *Ukrainske slovo*, 17 November 1935.

This idea of an "unfinished struggle" expanded among immigrants abroad, and was an underlying theme in the newspaper's contents. The newspaper regularly reported on developments in all regions of Ukraine, including signs of resistance to the occupying regimes. In early 1929 it covered Josef Stalin's seizure of power by ruthless elimination of his rivals. Was he another Robespierre, the newspaper wondered, and what would his rule hold in store for Ukrainians? "This question," it wrote, "troubles the soul and cannot leave the mind at peace."[625]

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[624] *Ukrainske slovo*, 12 May 1929.

The newspaper's worst fears were confirmed in 1932-1933 when a national tragedy struck Soviet Ukraine: millions died a slow and agonizing death in a famine induced by policies of the Stalinist regime. In its reports on the famine, *Ukrainske slovo* told its readers that it was pointless sending relief supplies to Soviet Ukraine, because there was no guarantee that these would ever reach the victims. It also rebuked the pro-Communist camp of the community, whose newspaper, *Ukrainska robitnycha hazeta*, exclaimed that "there is no famine in Ukraine, only in *Ukrainske slovo*!"[626]

In its analysis of the reasons for the famine, *Ukrainske slovo* concluded that it was Stalin's solution to the Ukrainian question. It drew the following lesson from this tragedy: "Every Ukrainian must now understand," it wrote in 1934, "that it is better to die with a weapon in hand than to perish from a prolonged and agonizing death of starvation."[627] It might be worth putting in this perspective the genesis of the USH which coincided with the famine in Ukraine.

That the Ukrainian community had radicalized in Argentina, that many considered each member was indispensable for the ongoing liberation struggle in the ancestral homeland, is evident in the tone of the obituary of a seven-year old boy, Mykhasko Cherednychenko, in 1932, which read:

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[625] *Ukrainske slovo*, 24 February 1929.

[626] *Ukrainske slovo*, 27 August 1933.

[627] *Ukrainske slovo*, 21 October 1934.

> **Eternal rest has befallen this boy, who would otherwise have grown up to be another nationally conscious Ukrainian and one more freedom fighter for the national cause.**
>
> **Sleep, dear son, sleep.**
> **And of the destiny and**
> **freedom of our beloved**
> **Ukraine, silently dream....**[628]

A private Ukrainian yearbook in Argentina published in 1931 contained a basic principle for a good nationalist to observe: not to forget that the "Poles and Muscovites [Russians] are the eternal enemies," because their aim was to obliterate the existence of a Ukrainian nation.[629] It was not so simple to wage a struggle against the Soviet state in Argentina because it had no diplomatic presence there until 1946. With Poland it was a different matter, since that country established an official presence in Argentina from 1922.

And the Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina, a significant portion of them, as can be recalled, veterans of the war against Poland (even *Ukrainske slovo* in its early issues referred to itself as the organ of the *sichovi striltsi*), were well aware of its presence in Argentina. With a newspaper at its disposal, the pro-independence forces could use *Ukrainske slovo* as an effective weapon in their campaign against Polish rule, by mobilizing resistance in Argentina. From its neonate days, it called for a boycott of Polish institutions in Argentina. In February 1928, it urged Ukrainians not to deliver their hard-earned money to savings banks at Polish diplomatic missions. The "Liakhs" (a derogatory term for Poles) will only use this money to destroy Ukrainians, it asserted.[630] Later in that year Prosvita in Dock Sud announced in the newspaper that Ukrainian males wishing to sponsor their wives or brides in Poland could obtain their affidavits from Ukrainian organizations in Argentina, thus circumventing payments to Polish institutions for the same service.[631] Towards the end of 1928 the newspaper announced a performance by Prosvita in Buenos Aires of the historical drama, *Stepovyi Hist* (Guest from the Steppe), which, it enthusiastically reminded its readers, dealt with the

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[628] *Ukrainske slovo*, 3 April 1932.

[629] *Ukrainskyi kalendar almanakh na 1932 rik* (Buenos Aires: La Fogata, 1931), 126.

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[630] *Ukrainske slovo*, 26 February 1928. See also *Ukrainske slovo*, 8 May 1932 and 18 August 1935, where an editorial by Mykhailo Danylyshyn suggested that Ukrainians follow the example of the Jewish diaspora which was boycotting German businesses abroad in protest of anti-Semitic actions in Germany. Ukrainians, he said, should do the same with respect to Poland.

[631] *Ukrainske slovo*, 7 October 1928.

Ukrainian insurrection against the "Liakhs" in 1648.[632] The enmity between Ukrainians and Poles can never end, it affirmed in late December 1928 following reports of arrests of Ukrainian activists in Western Ukraine, until Ukrainians are masters in their own land.[633]

The Polish government had no intention of granting Ukrainians that right, as can be witnessed by the events of the Pacification of 1930. The brutal treatment of Ukrainians in Poland in 1929-1930 roused not only Ukrainians in Europe, but those in Argentina, too. Such occurrences may have even strengthened the Ukrainian identity of the immigrants in Argentina. One settler in San Carlos Sud, in the province of Santa Fé, hinted at this stiffening of Ukrainian identity in his reaction to a *Glos Polski*, a local Polish newspaper, report of a "wedding in the campos," which gave the impression that the wedding of a Ukrainian immigrant woman in August 1930 was a Polish affair. The indignant settler took exception to Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Lithuanians being branded as Poles, and noted that even the four Ukrainian Roman Catholic guests had no relationship to Poland aside from their passports and their revulsion to its Pacification policy. He drew comfort from the fact that 25 pesos was raised at the wedding for war invalids of the Ukrainian Galician Army. At least in the campos of Argentina, the settler declared, the Polish state could not persecute them.[634]

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[632] *Ukrainske slovo,* 9 December, 1928.

[633] *Ukrainske slovo*, 23 December 1928.

Others were not so certain, believing that part of the mission of the Polish diplomatic corps in Argentina was to control and assimilate the Ukrainian immigrants. In 1932, an article in *Ukrainske slovo* on Polish associations in Misiones alleged that they existed only on paper. The only Polish activity in that region, it noted, was sponsored by Polish diplomatic circles, which included profitting from the labour of Ukrainian settlers by buying rice from them at below its real price.[635] The clout of the Polish diplomatic representation in Argentina became clear when Prosvita's *ridna shkola* programme encountered competition from the schools promoted by the Polish embassy in Buenos Aires. Even though in 1932-1933 Prosvita had committed funds for these part-time schools and waived fees for the children of the unemployed, school attendance had never increased as anticipated. When Prosvita leaders investigated the reasons for this, they discovered that Ukrainian children were instead attending classes at Polish schools in places such as Dock Sud. Their parents informed them that not only did the Polish schools not charge tuition, but in addition gifts were provided for the children. Others, revealing the "captivity of their souls," as one critic put it, went further by exclaiming that "the reality is now Poland, so of course our children are learning Polish and not Ukrainian."[636]

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[634] *Ukrainske slovo*, 6 September 1931.

[635] *Ukrainske slovo*, 17 April 1932.

The competition for the minds and souls of the immigrants, however, worked both ways and it appears that the Prosvita society gained the upper hand. Shortly after their discovery of Ukrainian defections to Polish schools, for instance, Prosvita intensified its schooling campaign and planned to (and eventually did) open more *ridni shkoly* in and near Dock Sud.[637]

By 1935 the Polish government grew wary of Ukrainian activities in Argentina. This was the year of the death of Poland's leader Jozef Pilsudski, who had dominated Polish politics since 1926, and of increasing militarization in Europe, risking the possibility of war. The activities of Ukrainians abroad and their relationship with those in Western Ukraine, from the Polish regime's perspective, posed a security concern. From April 1935 the Polish Ministry of Internal Affairs confiscated *Nash klych* of Buenos Aires.[638] Two months later the Polish embassy in Buenos Aires prepared a confidential report on Ukrainian activities in Argentina for the political department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw. Discussing the Ukrainian community's weaknesses the embassy advised that it was low on economic resources and had no influence in the Argentine mainstream.[639] Its strengths, according to the same report, lay in its acumen for rapid organization to the point that the German state saw in it a potential ally and capitalized on its anti-Polish orientation.[640]

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[636] Stepan Mandzii, "Ridna shkola v Argentyni," 72-74.

[637] Ibid., 74.

[638] *Ukrainske slovo*, 28 April 1935.

In its discussion of organizational activity among Ukrainians in Argentina, the embassy noted first the efforts of Prosvita, describing in detail its methods of raising money (membership dues, lotteries, press campaigns, concerts, etc), and expressed its concern about the development of the *ridni shkoly*. These now numbered five in Argentina (Dock Sud, Piñeyro, Valentin Alsina, Berisso, and Rosario), it noted, and one in Uruguay (Montevideo), and together encompassed no less than 250 children. The purpose of these schools, in its view, was "to inculcate in the pupils a hatred towards Poland."[641] The anti-Polish policy of organizations such as Prosvita, it was further alleged, was evident in such cases as instructing Ukrainian immigrants who committed a crime to present themselves before the law courts as "Poles," or, in pleading poverty, to seek relief funds from Polish official organizations, which are then used "for other ends."[642]

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[639] "Los ucranianos en Argentina," *Estudios Latinoamericanos*, 293.

[640] Ibid, 293 and 296.

[641] Ibid., 298.

A greater worry was the formation of the openly anti-Polish organization, the USH, which was, according to the embassy, composed of veterans of the war "against Russia and Poland, but especially the latter," and also members who had received military training in Poland. There was room for alarm on this score, the embassy asserted, because those who undergo technical military training in Poland today can use this experience to prepare "shock troops" among the immigrant masses tomorrow.[643] The embassy's fears were not totally without foundation: in 1933 the Sokil society noted that of its members who had never known military training, within two years of practicing drills with the organization, they were almost ready to enter the ranks of a future Ukrainian Army.[644] This confirms an orientation, but reality was stretched a little with the rather fanciful Polish allegation in 1934, repeated by the Argentine newspaper, *Critica*, of a Ukrainian legion planning to overrun Uruguay to use as a base for an anti-Polish war.[645] This would be one of many such charges blazoned by ill-informed intelligence gatherers and intriguers in the northern hemisphere of subversive conspiracies among immigrant groups in South America.

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[642] Ibid., 295-296.

[643] Ibid., 299.

[644] "Ukrainske tovarystvo 'Sokil' v Argentyni," in *Iliustrovanyi kaliendar Prosvita na 1934 rik*, 53.

Nevertheless, the Polish embassy in Buenos Aires considered the Ukrainian community in Argentina a menace, and sufficiently so to recommend that in future the Polish government enter into agreements with Argentine colonization agencies to have Ukrainian immigrants settle in small, dispersed groups. This would facilitate, in its view, the assimilation of the immigrants and thus weaken nationalist activity. Meanwhile the embassy would use its influence in Argentina to curtail anti-Polish agitation among the nationalist organizations.[646]

A major test of wills between the Ukrainian nationalists in Argentina and the Polish embassy came in 1936. On 26 January 1936 the three major nationalist organizations -- Prosvita, the USH and Sokil, and their sympathizers, staged a mass demonstration in the Argentine capital against Polish rule in which several thousand protesters are said to have taken part (those who were unable to attend, mainly the settlers in the interior, sent messages of support).[647] The protesters converged at the Salon 20 de setiembre in the city centre where telegrams from local non-Ukrainian entities, such as the Sociedad Nacionalista Gallega en la República Argentina, were read. The protesters publicized various aspects of Polish abuse of the Ukrainian and other minorities (Lithuanians, Germans, and Jews), and the lack of civil rights in Poland in general. The rally was a big success. It was covered by the mainstream Argentine press, and also reported sympathetically by Croatian, Jewish, and Hungarian community newspapers.[648] The Polish Embassy in Buenos Aires had solicited the intervention of Argentine state organs to prevent the rally from taking place,[649] but in vain.

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[645] See *Nash klych*, 4 July 1974.

[646] "Los ucranianos en Argentina," 305.

It was more successful in averting a follow-up action by the same organizations: a satirical stage play on the Warsaw Trial slated for 15 March also in the Salon 20 de setiembre, which the Polish Embassy complained made a mockery of Polish justice. The Polish embassy continued to monitor the activities of the Ukrainian immigrants and to seek the intervention of the Argentine government to restrict them through to 1939; the Ukrainian immigrants for their part persisted in their efforts to undermine and discredit the Polish state.[650]

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[647] *Ukrainske slovo,* 9 February 1936.

[648] Ibid.

[649] Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto. Expediente 5, año 1936 (Division Politica), caja 3660.

In the midst of the Great (and lesser) Power intrigues that characterized world politics in the 1930s, with their bag of espionage and counter-espionage tricks, a visitor, who embodied the transnational art of deception and perfidy *par excellence*, called on the now intricately and well-organized Ukrainian community.

He was Oleksii Pelypenko, though the spelling of his name has varied according to his place of residence (Polypenko in Argentina).[651] There is even inconsistency on his place of birth, with one source asserting Carpatho-Ukraine,[652] while another states that he was born "in a corner of Ukraine that later became part of Poland."[653] In 1938 Metropolitan Sheptytsky sought approval from the Vatican for Pelypenko as a Greek Catholic priest for Ukrainians of that rite in the Buenos Aires area. He received it in May of that year, with the caution that "he not engage in politics, only religion."[654] Events proved that the Vatican had good reason to be cautious.

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[650] See, for instance, ibid., and "Los ucranianos en la Argentina," 306-307.

[651] See, for instance, Ronald C. Newton, *The Nazi Menace in Argentina, 1931-1947* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 420.

[652] John Stepan, *The Russian Fascists: Tragedy and Farce in Exile* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1978), 269.

[653] Newton, *The Nazi Menace,* 169.

Pelypenko had arrived in Argentina not as a Catholic, but as an Orthodox priest. A Ukrainian Orthodox brotherhood in Buenos Aires accepted him and at a building the Orthodox community hoped to transform into a Ukrainian style church, he celebrated the holy liturgy. Pelypenko grew in stature in the community, for he was a gifted orator who, indeed, knew how to mix politics with religion. Not only Orthodox attended his services, but Ukrainian Catholics, too, since there were no Ukrainian Greek Catholic priests in Buenos Aires. In 1938 he decided to defect to the Greek Catholic faith, and wandered up and down the country visiting Ukrainian communities. He wrote numerous articles in a nationalist vein, gaining the confidence of local community leaders, but joining rival pro-independence factions. Then he inexplicably fled to the United States, where he worked for the FBI to spy primarily on the Ukrainian and Russian communities.[655]

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[654] TsDIAL fond. 358, opys 3, od.zb. 239.

[655] Tsymbal, *Spohady*, 68-75. Pelypenko was, in fact, a multiple agent, whose missions were more varied than the spelling of his name and the notions of his birthplace. He had many bidders for the intelligence he collected, which he sold "to the United States, the British, the Germans, the Italians, the Poles, and the Soviet Union," according to one scholar. See, Newton, *The Nazi Menace*, 169. Pelypenko profitted from their undercover competition, but the FBI discharged him, once it was discovered that he had one too many employers. He then

Pelypenko's arrival to Argentina coincided with the increasing consolidation of the Ukrainian pro-independence forces for common action. Events in Europe, such as the assassination by a Soviet agent of OUN leader Yevhen Konovalets on 23 May 1938, radicalized members of Prosvita and the USH alike, and both responded together to mobilize the community in a show of force and solidarity against the state-sanctioned execution.[656]

The increasing mobilization of the Ukrainian community in Argentina continued to alarm Polish officials through till the demise of the Polish state itself in the summer of 1939. A confidential report dispatched by the Polish legation in Buenos Aires to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 30 May 1939 drew attention to the "openly anti-Polish activities" conducted in Argentina by Prosvita and the USH.[657] Photographs apparently showing "armed" members of the USH parading in uniforms were submitted with the report.[658] If

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returned to Argentina after the war and was again at the centre of controversy. At one point he denounced Prosvita and the Basilian fathers to the Argentine Ministry of External Affairs, charging that members therein plotted with a number of Argentine generals to stage a *putsch* to overthrow President Juan Domingo Peron! See Kovalyk, *Vasyliiany v Argentyni*, 67. Pelypenko remained in Argentina and headed a small, breakaway faction of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church to his death in Buenos Aires on 13 June 1977 (Tsymbal, *Spohady*, 75).

[656] See, for instance, *Ukrainske slovo*, 12 June 1938.

[657] Cited in "Los ucranianos en Argentina," 306.

[658] Ibid., 307.

Pelypenko's descent on the Argentine Ukrainian community was related to Polish attempts to both monitor its activities and to weaken it by divisive behaviour (Pelypenko constantly switched his political and religious allegiances while in Argentina), then the strategy only had fleeting success in demoralizing segments of the community. The fabric of the Ukrainian community organizations was sufficiently cohesive for these to survive well into the war and beyond, when the pro-independence forces were strengthened by the arrival of post-war refugees. Their arrival in 1947-1952 signalled the dawn of a new era in the history of Ukrainian organizations in Argentina.

## Conclusion

In what context should the Ukrainian community organizations in Argentina be evaluated? Wsevolod Isajiw has studied the three distinct waves of Ukrainian immigration (prewar, interwar, and postwar) into the United States and Canada from a sociological perspective, and a number of his theoretical observations that resulted from the studies are relevant to a discussion of the Argentine Ukrainian experience. Isajiw distinguishes between two types of community organizations among Ukrainians in North America: those of the "expressive" nature and those articulating an "instrumental" orientation. The first applies to those organizations whose purpose was group maintenance through educational, social, religious, and cultural activities, and the second to those organizations whose function was to link the community with the larger society in order to advance ethnic goals by means of mainstream structures. Among such instrumental organizations were the North American Ukrainian insurance benefit associations, a product of North American society, and which are considered "instrumental" because they were a vehicle for providing both economic security and a shift in the ethnic status of the community.[659] With the exception of the short-lived Ukrainian producers' and consumers' cooperative in Misiones of 1922, and possibly the "Ukrainian Mutual-Aid" society in Buenos Aires of 1930-1931, the other Ukrainian organizations in Argentina were not of the instrumental-integrative type in Isajiw's terms of definition. Ukrainian cooperatives developed in Argentina only after World war II with the postwar influx of Ukrainian immigrants.

More reflection on this point will be made in the general conclusion that follows, but here it would be more practical to restrict our discussion to Isajiw's observations of the North American Ukrainian immigrant organizations, and link these interpretations with the broader literature on immigration associations. Isajiw defines an organized ethnic community as one which is "able to differentiate its

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[659] Isajiw, "Organizational Differentiation and Persistence of the Ethnic Community: Ukrainians in the United States," 85-94.

associations and activities in such a manner as to embrace the variations in interests and values of all those segments of the community which retain an identity with it."[660]

This approach is similar to that of British sociologist John Rex, who has broadened his discussion to include specific functions of immigration associations. Rex, in his studies of foreign immigrant associations in Western Europe, has identified four key functions inherent to their rationale. These are: overcoming social isolation, assisting individuals in solution of material and personal problems, combining to defend the group's interests in conflict and bargaining with the wider society, and maintaining and developing shared patterns of meaning.[661]

This approach to immigrant associations in Europe can be applied to interpreting the function of Ukrainian community organizations in Argentina, since, as can be inferred from the examples provided in this chapter (and the preceding one) they served a similar purpose. Rex has noted that immigrant associations have acted as an adaptive medium for foreigners in a new country where immigration has fractured kinship ties, and would seek to provide "a link above the level of kinship between migrant communities and their home villages or regions,"[662] and it is in this context that the evolution of Ukrainian community associations in Argentina can be assessed. The organizations the immigrants created in Argentina were to a large degree an extension of larger structures, whether religious, cultural, or political, existing in the homeland. In Argentina they came to serve the functions that Rex describes of providing emotional, spiritual, and social support, while defining for individual members the question of their identity. Rex has also acknowledged that immigrant associations may be placed in a position of competition with entities sponsored by the state of origin, which may intervene to provide for the needs of settlers abroad and assume consular duties on their behalf, but may also endeavour to supervise them politically over concern that the immigrant community "does not become a base for revolution."[663] Empirical examples of the relationship between the Ukrainian community in Argentina with the Polish polity in this regard have been provided in this chapter and therefore need not be recapitulated.

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[660] Ibid., 80.

[661] John Rex and Sasha Josephides, "Asian and Greek Cypriot Associations and Identity," in John Rex, et al., eds., *Immigrant Associations in Europe* (Aldershot, Brookfield, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Sydney: Gower, 1987), 19.

Rather, the stress here in interpreting the development of

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[662] John Rex, "Introduction," in John Rex, et al., *Immigrant Associations in Europe*, 9.

[663] Ibid., 8.

Ukrainian organizations in Argentina is their role in offering what Rex terms newly-defined "identity options." Organizations initiated by the community presented members with a means of defining their identity in Argentina, one which superseded nationality and was shaped by their experience of "living in a diaspora which is a more important focus for identity than any nationality."[664]

This complexity of identity choices became apparent with the split in the Prosvita society in 1928, when it no longer proved possible to unite Ukrainians on the basis of nationality because of the subsidiary question of "what sort of Ukrainians?" The answer to that question was reflected in the types of organizations that came into being with their own set of values, beliefs and modes of conduct. It was an answer which did not necessarily remain constant from individual to individual, as witnessed by shifts of allegiance of members from one organization to another, or the establishment of new rival entities.

The Ukrainian organizations of the interwar period served the functions of immigrant associations generally of defending (and mobilizing for) their group's interests and maintaining ethnic solidarity (both in and outside Argentina), in the manner that these principles were defined within their circles. That a single entity could not be achieved to unite the community under a common agenda has no bearing on whether or not this failure interfered with efforts at raising the community from its "tomb" and into "salvation," as some community activists had argued. Rather, the multiplicity of organizations, as Isajiw has suggested for North America, should be viewed from the perspective that they expressed the spirit of the Argentine Ukrainian community in its pluralistic and intricate composition.

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[664] Ibid., 9.

# CONCLUSION

The 80,000 Ukrainians who arrived in Argentina in the course of 1920-1939 constituted the largest single bloc of Ukrainian emigrants resettling overseas in that period. The reasons for their relocation have been specified in Chapter One, where a multicausal model to explain this process has been posited. This model takes into account such interplaying factors as the role of states promoting or restricting emigration/immigration, the issues of step-migration, including seasonal labour in countries of close proximity, kinship ties abroad, the mediums of information available to potential emigrants presenting the options for resettlement abroad, and above all, stresses the primacy of personal decision-making, conditioned by the emigrants' evaluation of local conditions and the particular advantages a move abroad, whether permanent or temporary, could offer.

The flexibility of a multi-causal approach to studying emigration has been reflected in the preceding chapters by the presentation of anecdotal material denoting variance in the circumstances of individual cases of emigrants. This thus raises the question as to how far one can evince a collective experience for Ukrainians emigrating to Argentina in the interwar period. Were the circumstances that induced, say, the Galician Ivan Kryvy the same as, for instance, his future ideological rival in Argentina, the Volynian Panas Hubarchuk, or, for that matter, the eastern Ukrainian, Tetiana Tsymbal? Did they and the others who emigrated to Argentina share the same set of expectations on embarking on their journey and was this move characterized by the same level of preparedness? Was Argentina the only considered destination of these emigrants and were the experiences of those who made their moves accompanied and alone identical? In answering these questions the evidence suggests that there was no strict uniformity of principles dictating the emigration process, but, when comparing Ukrainians with other groups, one can venture into a common set of traits that shaped an intrinsically collective experience. One distinguishing factor was that as a minority, Ukrainians tended to emigrate overseas on a scale greater than was true of the dominant groups (as indicated in Chapter Two), a reflection of their position in local society, whether in Poland, the USSR or Romania, and a factor suggesting that the political situation at home was not one where Ukrainians could exercise influence in effecting viable alternatives to the circumstances inducing the mass exodus in their respective communities. It was this lack of political influence which shaped the *Weltanschauung* of many of the Ukrainians who emigrated to Argentina, and although they responded to this condition in different ways, there was a common sentiment that perhaps they were, to borrow the term of the *Manchester Guardian* correspondent profiled in Chapter Five, "a minority without a champion."

The Ukrainian emigrants shared another trait in that the vast majority remained in their adopted country after their admission. They came to be the most stable of the large-scale European immigration waves to Argentina, attaining the most favourable non-return rate throughout the interwar period. They were also among the least prepared to cope with readjustment in Argentina, having no familiar well-established organizations to turn to for support in aleatory times, as had other immigrant groups. In this respect, they differed also from their counterparts in places such as Canada, where the substantially much larger prewar Ukrainian community had formed an effective organizational infrastructure from which newcomers could benefit.

This absence of organization, the transitory and sometimes precarious and uncoordinated nature of Ukrainian settlement in Argentina, motivated one community activist to pose the rhetorical question of whether Argentina would be destined to be the immigrants' "tomb or salvation." It was a fair commentary on the importance of organization. While in some respects Ukrainian organizations in Argentina were modelled on patterns in Ukraine or on those developed by their counterparts in places such as Canada, the organizational paradigm of Argentine Ukrainians reflected conditions intrinsic to their experience in their new adopted country. Mutual benefit societies, popular among North American Ukrainians, for instance, were absent among Argentina's Ukrainians. The reason was not because they lacked the acumen for initiating such associations -- the evidence would suggest otherwise, -- but rather because the functions assumed by such fraternal organizations were appropriated by corporate banks (Bank of Boston, Banco Germanico, etc,) in Buenos Aires, which hired Ukrainian employees to represent the community. Similarly, while Prosvita associations existed in Canada, they did not maintain the cohesive, centralized structure which characterized the Argentine paradigm, again reflecting conditions in this country where the Prosvita model in Lviv, with its emphasis on cultural and educational activities appears to have served the needs of some of the immigrants. The different trajectories of the Prosvita legacy abroad is apparent in A. Gospodyn's assessment of the Canadian experience, on which he writes that the cultural societies that emerged in Canada either bore the name Prosvita or assumed another, but with the activities being the same.[665] It is important to stress this distinction, because in Argentina no such trend existed: the Prosvita headquarters in Buenos Aires was largely able to absorb into its fold those organizations which professed similar aims, but originally commenced with a different name. Because it was able to consolidate such groups into a single centralized structure, Argentina remains, along with Paraguay, the only country of Ukrainian settlement abroad where the Prosvita institution, with component branches and autonomous wings, has remained intact as a viable, supra-regional entity.

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[665] A. Gospodyn, "Ohliad prosvitnykh tovarystv u Kanadi," in *Narys istorii matirnoho Tovarystva "Prosvita" i ohliad prosvitnykh tovarystv u Kanadi* (Winnipeg: Prosvita, 1968), 289.

Although actual membership in Prosvita in Argentina by 1939 only embraced a little more than 1% of the Ukrainian community population, the leaders of Prosvita constituted an "ethnic elite," whose prominence in this organization, as Isajiw has said in his studies of Ukrainian organizations in North America,[666] allowed them to pose as spokespersons for the community as a whole. And through the network of Prosvita branches across the country they were able to mobilize many more immigrants for mass actions than only the actual members.

The community infrastructure, especially the press, was initially slow to develop, perhaps reflecting the nature of Ukrainian immigrant life. A Polish embassy official in 1935 hinted in this direction when he characterized (see the previous chapter) the Argentine Ukrainian community as one

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[666] Isajiw, "Organizational Differentiation and Presistence of the Ethnic Community: Ukrainians in the United States," 88.

"low in economic resources," but the same official also remarked on the community's capability for "rapid organization." In discussing the significance of the first point, recourse can be taken to Tadeusz Łepkowski's hierarchical pyramid of immigration (see Chapter Three), a thesis on the relative differentiation in the historical and socioeconomic backgrounds of the various groups of immigrants which would appear to be reinforced by political scientist Milton J. Esman's study of "diasporas." In Esman's opinion:

> Migrant communities have greater or lesser ability to influence their new environment according to the economic resources, occupational skills and communication capabilities they bring with them. Their integration varies with their original endowments and the rate at which the migrants and their descendants acquire these capabilities.[667]

Thus, a valid question that can be posed is whether the slow initiation of dynamic Ukrainian organizations in the interwar period was a product of the community's scarce resources at the outset (a condition which in turn contributed to the *polaco* epithet), the demands of immigrant life, which for many entailed no one established base owing to long periods of seasonal labour, and the absence of a specifically Ukrainian embassy which could facilitate the provision of ethnic organizations.

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[667] Milton J. Esman, "Diasporas and International Relations," in Gabriel Shaffer, ed., *Modern Diasporas in International Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), 337-338.

The Lithuanian community, with whom Ukrainian leaders compared their own, appear to have been better equipped in developing a cohesive organizational structure, but the relative advantages that they enjoyed vis-a-vis the Ukrainian community are not identified. Perhaps uneven levels of national consciousness may have been an additional factor inhibiting the degree of expansion of the Ukrainian organizations compared with the Lithuanian. Isajiw has contested the thesis of another sociologist, Nathan Glazer, that the immigration experience leads to a heightened awareness of a common ethnicity.[668] Isajiw's example is the divergent paths in organization that the Ukrainian immigrants from Transcarpathia and Galicia followed in the United States. While Isajiw's contradiction of the Glazer thesis has itself been challenged,[669] his contention to the contrary should not be dismissed outright. As this study of Ukrainians in Argentina has demonstrated, Ukrainians from Volyn came to largely prefer different organizations from their counterparts in Galicia, and while in Ukraine Galician and Volynian Ukrainians eventually did collaborate in common causes, precisely as a result of "heightened awareness of a common ethnicity," this did not happen in Argentina. There the Ukrainian pro-Communist organizations, in which Volynian Ukrainians were better represented than Galician Ukrainians, confederated with Belarusian associations, and continued to deemphasize their ethnicity in the war years by enveloping it in a Pan-Slavic context. Similar examples can de drawn from the Ukrainian experience in Brazil, where one writer observed that Galician war veterans of the interwar period directed Ukrainian "cultural-national life," while Volynian Ukrainians were notably absent from such active participation. Instead, according to this writer, Volynian Ukrainians tended to be found within the ranks of the Russian Orthodox Church, shying away from organized Ukrainian activity.[670] Nor does emigration appear to have had a significant impact on the national consciousness of the prewar eastern Ukrainian immigrants in Argentina, since they continued to be represented in the Russian organizational milieu.

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[668] Isajiw, "Organizational Differentiation and Persistence of the Ethnic Community: Ukrainians in North America," 82.

[669] See Richard Renoff, "Commentary," in Paul R. Magocsi, ed., *The Ukrainian Experience in the United States: A Symposium* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, Harvard University, 1979), 97-98.

Notwithstanding the asymmetrical pattern of national consciousness, as a whole, the Ukrainian community in Argentina was, as the Polish diplomat accurately affirmed in 1935, "capable of rapid organization." Indeed they were probably not much less organized, at least at the secular level, than Ukrainians in Canada were by 1939, with the exception of church parishes, which owed to the greater shortage of priests in Argentina. The community activist who compared the capabilities of Ukrainians in Argentina with those in places such as Canada, did not utter an empty statement when he suggested a similar organizational potential. By comparing the relative strength of two of the more dynamic organizations in both countries, the FUBWO in Argentina and its pro-Communist counterpart in Canada, the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians (AUUC), the veracity of this presupposition is validated. At its peak, in 1946, the AUUC is said to have had 13,000 members (5% of the total Canadian Ukrainian population);[671] the FUBWO, in the same year, claimed a membership of 10,000,[672] indicating that it was proportionately larger in terms of the share of the Ukrainian population it encompassed in Argentina.

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[670] F. Kulchynsky, "Volyniaky v Brazylii," *Litopys Volyni* 4 (1958): 84-85.

What has transpired since then, of course, is not a matter to be addressed in this dissertation. But the points raised in this conclusion, including the last example alluded to above, may serve to illustrate that as studies are conducted on comparative stages of development of societies such as Argentina and Canada, the undertaking of similar comparative studies of their component immigrant populations would also be an invaluable exercise for the purpose of broadening the context in which their respective experiences are analyzed.

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[671] Olha Woycenko, "Community Organizations," in Manoly R. Lupul, ed., *A Heritage in Transition: Essays in the History of Ukrainians in Canada* (Edmonton: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), 180.

[672] Ivan Vuiko, "Chakerero," 65.

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## APPENDIX 1

## MEMBERSHIPS OF THE PROSVITA SOCIETY (1935) AND THE FEDERATION OF UKRAINIAN & BELARUSIAN WORKERS ORGANIZATIONS (1936-1938) BY DISTRICT

| ORGANIZATION | DISTRICT | MEMBERSHIP |
|---|---|---|
| | (PROVINCE OF BUENOS AIRES) | |
| Prosvita | Buenos Aires | ? |
| FUBWO | | 200 (late 1936) |
| Prosvita | Dock Sud | 60 |
| FUBWO | | 43 (July 1936) |
| Prosvita | Parque de los Patricios/ Nueva Pompeia | - |
| FUBWO | | ? 34? |
| Prosvita | Valentin Alsina | 20 |
| FUBWO | | 22 (May 1937) |
| Prosvita | Piñeyro | 30 |
| FUBWO | | - |
| Prosvita | | - |
| FUBWO | Mataderos | ? |
| Prosvita | Villa Urquiza | - |
| FUBWO | | 70 |
| Prosvita | General Necochea | 41 |
| FUBWO | | - |
| Prosvita | Berisso | 50 |
| FUBWO | | - |
| | (PROVINCE OF SANTA FE) | |
| Prosvita | Rosario de Santa Fé | 80 |
| FUBWO | | 50 |

(CHACO)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Prosvita | Las | 23 |
| FUBWO | Breñas | ? 17? |
| Prosvita | Villa Angela | 27 |
| FUBWO | (Lota 6) | - |
| Prosvita | Villa | 30 |
| FUBWO | Berthet | |
| Prosvita | Pampa del | 20 |
| FUBWO | Infierno | - |

(MISIONES)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Prosvita | Tres | 33 |
| FUBWO | Capones | - |
| Prosvita | Florentino | 33 |
| FUBWO | Ameghino | - |

(PROVINCE OF SANTIAGO DEL ESTERO)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Prosvita | Colonia | 33 |
| FUBWO | Dora | - |

Source: *Iliustrovanyi kaliendar Prosvita na rik 1936* Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1935 and *Ilustrovanyi kalendar Svitlo na 1939 rik* Buenos Aires: Svitlo, 1938. In addition, Prosvita in 1935 claimed smaller branches in the following provinces: Santa Fé (San Carlos Sud), Misiones (Dos Arroyos, Bompland, Cerro Azul, Azara, Obera, and General Belgrano), and Mendoza (Carmenza). FUBWO also claimed lodges in the Buenos Aires district of Tigre, in Misiones and Mendoza.

## APPENDIX 2

### YEAR OF ARRIVAL OF 578 IMMIGRANTS

| Year | Number | % |
|---|---|---|
| 1920 | 1 | 0.02 |
| 1921 | - | - |
| 1922 | 6 | 1.0 |
| 1923 | 20 | 3.4 |
| 1924 | 17 | 2.9 |
| 1925 | 28 | 4.8 |
| 1926 | 45 | 7.8 |
| 1927 | 90 | 15.5 |
| 1928 | 86 | 14.8 |
| 1929 | 86 | 14.8 |
| 1930 | 53 | 9.1 |
| 1931 | 16 | 2.7 |
| 1932 | 8 | 1.4 |
| 1933 | 3 | 0.5 |
| 1934 | 7 | 1.2 |
| 1935 | 7 | 1.2 |
| 1936 | 22 | 3.8 |
| 1937 | 40 | 6.9 |
| 1938 | 31 | 5.3 |
| 1939 | 12 | 2.0 |
| Total | 578 | 100.00 |

## APPENDIX 3

## AGES OF 578 IMMIGRANTS ON ARRIVAL

| AGE RANGE | NUMBER | % |
|---|---|---|
| 1-10 | 7 | 1.21 |
| 11-15 | 10 | 1.73 |
| 16-20 | 77 | 13.32 |
| 21-25 | 169 | 29.2 |
| 26-30 | 152 | 26.3 |
| 31-35 | 79 | 13.6 |
| 36-40 | 42 | 7.2 |
| 41-45 | 21 | 3.6 |
| 46-59 | 21 | 3.6 |

## APPENDIX 4

## LIFE SPAN OF 492 INTERWAR UKRAINIAN IMMIGRANTS

| AGE AT DEATH | NUMBER |
|---|---|
| 17 | 1 |
| 29-35 | 10 |
| 36-40 | 9 |
| 41-45 | 14 |
| 46-50 | 30 |
| 51-55 | 43 |
| 56-60 | 60 |
| 61-65 | 97 |
| 66-70 | 80 |
| 71-75 | 68 |
| 76-80 | 46 |
| 81-85 | 22 |
| 86-90 | 9 |

Average: 63.9

# APPENDIX 5

## COUNTY (*POVIT*) OF BIRTH OF 435 GALICIAN INTERWAR IMMIGRANTS

| *POVIT* | NUMBER |
|---|---|
| Berezhany | 8 |
| Bibrka | 24 |
| Borshchiv | 2 |
| Brody | 18 |
| Buchach | 15 |
| Chortkiv | 4 |
| Dobromyl | 8 |
| Dolyna | 1 |
| Drohobych | 2 |
| Horodenka | 3 |
| Husiatyn | 1 |
| Iaroslav | 6 |
| Iavoriv | 2 |
| Kalush | 3 |
| Kaminka-Strumylova | 7 |
| Kolomyia | 12 |
| Kosiv | 2 |
| Kulykiv | 1 |
| Lisko | 7 |
| Lviv | 10 |
| Mostyska | 5 |
| Nadvirna | 6 |
| Peremyshl | 29 |
| Peremyshliany | 4 |
| Pidhaitsi | 6 |
| Radekhiv | 9 |
| Rava Ruska | 4 |
| Rohatyn | 16 |
| Rudky | 3 |
| Sambir | 8 |
| Sianik | 3 |
| Skalat | 13 |
| Sniatyn | 1 |
| Sokal | 12 |
| Stanyslaviv | 15 |
| Stryi | 8 |
| Terebovlia | 11 |
| Ternopil | 51* |
| Tovmach | 9 |
| Turka | 1 |
| Zalishchyky | 17 |
| Zbarazh | 17 |
| Zboriv | 19 |
| Zhydachiv | 23 |
| Zolochiv | 9 |

[*refers to the region as a whole, where counties therein are not identified]

# APPENDIX 6

## How to Initiate a Prosvita Branch

Advice on how to found a branch and obtain formal admission into Prosvita in Argentina:

1) To found a branch of Prosvita it is necessary to have at least 20 (twenty) members. These members can be men, women, and children above the age of 14.

2) Arrange a Founding Meeting (or an Extraordinary General Meeting) in which it is necessary to follow these procedures:
   - a) Read aloud and approve the statute of Prosvita in Buenos Aires.
   - b) Complete an application form for admission into the organization.
   - c) Elect a steering committee whose number should correspond to the figure stipulated in the statute.

3) Prepare a list and enumeration of the number of branch members, and provide the characteristics of the Board members, their ages, and occupations.

4) Prepare a short account of current branch activities (or the work of the initiative group).

5) Prepare a financial statement and a record of the property and inventory of the branch (when applicable).

6) All the documents and reports alluded to above are to be sent to Prosvita Headquarters in Buenos Aires.

Source: "Iak zasnovuvaty filii t-va "Prosvita," in *Iliustrovanyi kaliendar Prosvita na rik 1936* Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1935, 185.

# APPENDIX 7

## Obligations of Every Ukrainian Immigrant in Argentina

The obligations of every Ukrainian in Argentina are:

1) To everywhere (before the government, an employer, etc) present yourself as a Ukrainian, not as a *ruso*, *polaco*, or Austrian.

2) To never be embarassed about your origin, language, or faith, but be proud of your heritage and impart it to your children.

3) At every step, to conduct yourself honourably and in dignity, so that the reputation of your people does not suffer, but is exalted before public opinion.

4) But before anything else, the obligation of every Ukrainian is to be a member of the Prosvita society and to subscribe to *Ukrainske slovo*, the only Ukrainian newspaper in Argentina.

The obligations of every Ukrainian immigrant in Argentina are:

1) To learn the local (Spanish) language, because it would then be easier to find a job, but without neglecting or forgetting your own language.

2) Not to consume alcoholic beverages, because to do so in the local hot climate poses a hazard to your health.

3) Save every hard-earned cent, in order to be secure at old age or in sickness.

4) Not to forget about those of yours who have remained behind far away in the homeland.

Source: *Kalendar-almanakh Prosvita na rik 1934* Buenos Aires: Prosvita, 1934.

# APPENDIX 8

## Dates of Founding of Prosvita Societies in the Interwar Period

| REGION | DATE |
|---|---|
| Province of Buenos Aires | |
| Berisso | 11 February 1924 |
| Buenos Aires (Headquarters) | 1 August 1924 |
| Dock Sud | 19 December 1926 |
| Villa Selino | 1 June 1934 |
| Piñeyro | 14 October 1934 |
| Valentin Alsina | 5 May 1935 |
| Misiones | |
| Bompland | 1 July 1930 |
| Tres Capones | 12 February 1933 |
| Florentino Ameghino | 25 November 1934 |
| Dos Aroyos | 12 December 1934 |
| Picada Belgrano (Cerro Azul) | 14 July 1935 |
| Santa Fé | |
| Rosario | 14 January 1934 |
| Chaco | |
| Las Breñas | 21 August 1932 |
| Pampa del Infierno | 25 May 1933 |
| Villa Berthet | 20 March 1934 |
| Villa Angela (Lota 6) | 27 May 1934 |
| General Necochea | 24 March 1935 |
| Santiago del Estero | |
| Colonia Dora | 1 April 1934 |
| Mendoza | |
| San Pedro | Mid-June 1935 |